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THE WORKS OF Mr JOHN GLAS.

Edinburgh 1761

The Teſtimony of the KING OF MARTYRS concerning his Kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. explained and illuſtrated in ſcripture-light.

John i. 46. —— *Come and ſee.*

Rev. xvi. 10. *And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the ſeat of the beaſt; and his kingdom was full of darkneſs and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

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The PREFACE.

WHen there is ſo much regard paid to the teſtimony of men, which can never be the ground of our faith, it cannot be queſtioned, but that more regard is due to the teſtimony of the author and finiſher of faith: "For if we "receive the witneſs of men, the witneſs of God is greater." At leaſt it may be expected, that as many as would "fight "the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life," will give a fair hearing to this good confeſſion which Jeſus Chriſt witneſſed before Pontius Pilate. And certainly no true Chriſtian will find reaſon to be aſhamed of this teſtimony of our Lord, even though it will make all them that are not aſhamed to confeſs it in all its parts, partakers of the afflictions of

the gospel: "For God hath not given them the spirit of fear, "but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

The true cause of my sufferings is the open confession of this testimony of Jesus Christ, as I understand it: and no man can confess any part of divine revelation, but according to the understanding he has of it; otherwise it is not his own confession, but another man's; or, he confesses not truths, but words. For this cause I suffer in my name, by cruel mockings and reproaches; and in my ministry, being rejected, as the "head of the corner" himself was, by them that pretend to be "builders:" and for this cause I suffer the loss of my living in the world, as far as lies in the power of my persecutors; and it will be owing to the good providence of God, and the equity of the magistrate, if my sufferings do not proceed yet further. Yet, in all this, the enemies of my cause persuade themselves and their followers, that "they "are doing God good service:" and I am persuaded, that I ought not to think this "strange, as though some strange "thing had happened to me."

But being thus debarred from that access I once had to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and declare the testimony of Jesus Christ in a public manner, I thought it my duty to do my best to make it manifest, according to my measure, by means of the press, (which is yet free, and has been, by the good providence of him that is "head over all things to the "church," made very useful in the recovery of Christianity from the corruption of it by antichrist); and so to offer my testimony against the prevailing errors of the day, and vindicate the present truth, "the word of Christ's patience," that has been condemned and rejected by our "builders."

I am very sensible, that, as it was never designed to please any faction or party of this world, no party will be altogether pleased with it. But there are two sorts of men from which the gospel met with opposition at the first, and which remain unto this day, though perhaps under other names: and from both I expect heavy censures.

1. They that affect a temporal kingdom to Christ, and a worldly church. Thus, "minding earthly things," and professing dissatisfaction with the Christian doctrine of "patient "bearing the cross after Christ," they would have the nations of this earth (now brought under the Christian name, not by the influence of the gospel, by which men were made Christians at first, but by those means which served unto the treading of the outer court of God's house under the feet of the Gentiles)

Gentiles) to come in the room of God's ancient nation Iſrael; and they would have the powers of the earth, and kings of the nations, to be ſucceſſors to the rulers of that kingdom of God, eſpecially to the kings that ſat on the throne of David. Theſe men are much offended it ſhould be now ſaid, that as there was a conſtant prefiguration of Chriſt, as a prophet and prieſt, in that earthly church, ſo it had a conſtant prefiguration of his kingdom. Their chief arguments are, ſigns, the fathers and martyrs, and the authority of the church, or of the clergy; but the ſtrength of their cauſe lies in deceit and violence: and from them, and thoſe that will be ſtirred up by them, they that will not be aſhamed of the teſtimony of our Lord, may expect the treatment of which he forewarns his followers, John xvi. 2.

2. Thoſe that are for natural religion new dreſſed, and having on the Chriſtian name, but really ſet up in oppoſition to Chriſtianity. Theſe are the wiſe men, the orators, the "diſ-"puters of this world." If any one of them ſhall condeſcend to take any notice of what's here ſaid, it will be treated by them with ſcorn and contempt, and with them it will paſs for nonſenſe, myſticiſm, and enthuſiaſm; and, notwithſtanding all their pretences to the generous principles of humanity, and liberty of conſcience, ſome of them can alſo perſecute.

The charge of enthuſiaſm was ſome time brought by the Epiſcopal faction againſt the men of the eſtabliſhed church; for when that faction, for the ſupport of their cauſe, embraced the Engliſh forms, and thoſe of the church ſpake of the ſpirituality of God's worſhip, and of praying in the ſpirit, there was a mighty cry among them againſt enthuſiaſm: and for a recompence of this their contempt of the ſpirit of Chriſt and his gifts, there came a ſort of ſpirit upon ſome of that faction, and they became downright enthuſiaſts, according to the word of our Lord, John v. 43. And it is alſo very remarkable, that the Lord hath, at this day, ſo far confounded the language of the builders of natural religion and morality, in oppoſition to true Chriſtianity, that they cannot underſtand one another about the very foundation of their building.

For my part, I cannot underſtand what ſhould be the deſign of the preſent cry againſt enthuſiaſm, if it be not to make us conclude, that becauſe there are falſe ſpirits, therefore there are none true; and ſo to fright us out of all ſpirituality, and every thing that's above nature in religion; and this in an age that does not ſeem to be in an humour for

any thing like ſpirituality. But it is ſurpriſing to ſee the men of the eſtabliſhed church, who were ſometimes ſufferers under the reproach of enthuſiaſm, beginning to talk in that ſame ſtyle wherein their party has been reproached. And even the Judaiſers will agree now in the accuſation of enthuſiaſm againſt the truths of Chriſt by me confeſſed, though themſelves ſhew full as great regard in ſome things, to their own experience, and that of their fathers and their prophecies, as they do to the written word of God.

Yet Chriſtians muſt not reject all ſpirits, leſt they ſin againſt the Spirit of Chriſt; and they muſt "try the ſpirits, "whether they be of God; becauſe many falſe prophets are "gone out into the world." And if, upon trial, they find any of the marks of an antichriſtian, or falſe ſpirit, upon the doctrine that I teach, I am content it be rejected. If I deny, that "Chriſt is come in the fleſh;" if I ſet up any thing that he came in the fleſh to deſtroy; if I ſeek to deſtroy any thing that he came in the fleſh to eſtabliſh; and if that wherein I differ from others do not carry in it a confeſſion, that he "is come in the fleſh:" then let my doctrine be rejected, as coming from a falſe ſpirit. If it favour not of that Spirit who "ſpeaks not of himſelf," but glorifies Chriſt, taking the things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them unto his people; and if I confeſs not "that Jeſus is the Chriſt," or "deny the "Father and the Son;" let me paſs for a liar, a deceiver, and an antichriſt. If I ſpeak of the world, and if the world hear me, let me be rejected, as one of thoſe falſe prophets that "are gone out into the world." If I hear not the word of the apoſtles of Chriſt, and if I reject or add any thing to their explication of the Old Teſtament prophecies, and uſe a private interpretation of my own, or of any ſet of men; if I ſpeak not according to the Old Teſtament and the New; let it be declared there is no light in my doctrine: and if I ſpeak any thing againſt the merciful ſpirit of the goſpel, or the goſpel-commandment of brotherly love, then let it be ſaid, that my "doctrine is not of God." See 1 John iv. 1.——8. But if it ſhall be found otherwiſe, let them that cry me down, and perſecute me, as a deceiver, and falſe teacher, &c. take care what manner of ſpirit they themſelves are of, and how they will anſwer to the judge that ſtands before the door; unto whom I commit my cauſe.

The

The TESTIMONY.

JOHN xviii. 36. 37.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

CHAPTER I.

Of the prophecies of Christ's kingdom.

OUR Lord stands here before the Roman governor, accused of making himself the "king of the Jews," and so being against Cæsar, Luke xxiii. 1. 2. This accusation is brought against him by men that were offended in him, because he came not to them in a temporal kingdom, against Cæsar, as they themselves desired and expected; so it came very ill from them: and Pilate, who could not but know their expectations of the Messiah, might well understand, that "for envy they had delivered him," Matth. xxvii. 18.

In answer to this charge, our Lord denies not, but confesses himself to be the promised king, and owns his kingdom. Pilate had asked him, vers. 33. "Art thou the king "of the Jews?" He answers, "Sayest thou this thing of "thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Pilate being touched with this, as respecting his method of procedure in judgment, answers with a disdain of the Jewish nation, and casts the blame on the nation, and the chief priests, that had "delivered him to him." Here is an instance of church-rulers their delivering men to the civil magistrate to be punished. Christ has forewarned his followers of this treatment; and this has been abundantly practised upon the saints and martyrs of Jesus by antichrist: but he has never given any encouragement to his churches, or their overseers, to take this course. Pilate inquires again, what he had done? Jesus, in his answer, owns his kingdom; "my kingdom," and "my "servants."

" ſervants." From which Pilate infers that queſtion, " Art " thou a king then ?" Jeſus anſwers, " Thou ſayeſt that I " am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe " came I into the world," *&c.*

It would ſeem, he ſhuns to own himſelf now the king of that nation of the Jews, who were denying him to be their king: neither does he own himſelf to be ſuch a king as the Jews were looking for, or as Pilate was now inquiring about. But he confeſſes that he is that king that was promiſed to the Jews, ſpoken of by their prophets, and that was to come of the Jews, Matth. xxvii. 11. Mark xv. 2. Luke xxiii. 3. " Art " thou the king of the Jews ? Jeſus ſaid, Thou ſayeſt."

SECTION I.

JAcob, when bleſſing Judah, ſpake thus of him, Gen. xlix. 10. " The ſceptre ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a " lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and " unto him ſhall the gathering of the people be."

This prophecy imports, 1. That the chief government among the children of Iſrael, that were to become a great nation, ſhould be in the tribe of Judah, of which that Shiloh ſhould come: " For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and " of him the chief ruler," or prince, 1 Chron. v. 2.

2. That this government ſhould have its end and iſſue in that Shiloh to come; and when this government ſhould be utterly at an end, that Shiloh ſhould then certainly be come.

3. That this Shiloh ſhould have a collection of people under him obeying him; and when this ſhould take place, the ſceptre would depart from Judah.

Moſes, in bleſſing Judah, Deut. xxxiii. 7. referring unto Jacob's prophecy, ſays, " Hear the voice of Judah, and bring " him (*i. e.* Shiloh) unto his people."

But the moſt notable promiſe of this King, the Meſſiah, is that made to David, which we have recorded, 2 Sam. vii. 11.—16. "——And as ſince the time that I commanded " judges to be over my people Iſrael, and have cauſed thee to " reſt from all thine enemies. Alſo the Lord telleth thee, that " he will make thee an houſe. And when thy days be ful- " filled, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers, I will ſet up " thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall proceed out of thy bowels, " and I will eſtabliſh his kingdom. He ſhall build an houſe " for my name, and I will eſtabliſh the throne of his king- " dom for ever. I will be his father, and he ſhall be my " ſon.

" ſon. If he commit iniquity, I will chaſten him with the " rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men. " But my mercy ſhall not depart away from him, as I took " it from Saul, whom I put away before thee And thine " houſe, and thy kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever." " before thee: thy throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever." And, 1 Chron. xvii. 10.—14. "——And ſince the time that I " commanded judges to be over my people Iſrael. Moreover, " I will ſubdue all thine enemies. Furthermore, I tell thee, " that the Lord will build thee an houſe. And it ſhall come " to paſs, when thy days be expired, that thou muſt go to " be with thy fathers, that I will raiſe up thy ſeed after " thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and I will eſtabliſh his " kingdom. He ſhall build me an houſe, and I will eſtabliſh " his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he ſhall be " my ſon, and I will not take my mercy away from him, as " I took it from him that was before thee. But I will ſettle " him in mine houſe, and in my kingdom for ever, and his " throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore."

We may ſee in the following verſes how much David was affected with that promiſe, when he received it. This is the word upon which God cauſed him to hope, the covenant that God made with him. This great promiſe is much inſiſted on in the Pſalms, where it is ſeveral times particularly mentioned; as, in Pſal. lxxxix. 19.—36. and Pſal. cxxxii. 11. yea, throughout the Pſalms. And in the prophecies of the prophets that followed after David, this promiſe is explained upon and unfolded; as for inſtance, Iſ. ix. 6. 7. Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. and xxxiii. from the 15th verſe to the end. We find this promiſe alſo pointed at by the angel foretelling the birth of Chriſt to his mother, Luke i. 31. 32. 33.; and in the ſong of Zacharias, Luke i. 69. 70. And that deſignation, *The Son of David*, given to the promiſed Meſſiah by the Jews, and to Jeſus by them that believed in him, was taken from this promiſe. And it is to be noticed, that the great ſcope and ſenſe of this promiſe, and the fulfillment of it in Jeſus Chriſt, is declared in the firſt goſpel-ſermon after his aſcenſion, Acts ii. 30.—35. " Therefore being a prophet, " and knowing that God had ſworn with an oath to him, " that of the fruit of his loins, according to the fleſh, he " would raiſe up Chriſt, to ſit upon his throne," *&c.*

Now, if we conſider that promiſe made to David, we will find it was twofold, or had a twofold aſpect: firſt, to David's ſucceſſors in the throne of that ſame kingdom where David reigned

reigned in Jeruſalem on earth, 1 Chron. xxviii. 4.—7. 2 Kings viii. 19. 1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.; and then, chiefly, to the Meſſiah, for whoſe ſake the promiſe reſpecting David's temporal houſe was given. In the firſt reſpect, this promiſe was ſome way conditional; in the ſecond, it was abſolute: in the firſt reſpect it was but temporal, reaching the full end of it, and having its iſſue, in the Meſſiah; but as it reſpected him it was eternal: "Thine houſe and thy "kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever before thee; thy "throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever. I will ſettle him in "mine houſe, and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne "ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore."

And it is evident, that the promiſe of eſtabliſhing David's temporal houſe and his ſons upon that throne, had a reference to that which is eternal, and that ſeed of David eminently ſo called, even him who was to be ſettled in God's houſe and kingdom for evermore. That promiſe ſpake of him through theſe, and David's temporal houſe and kingdom, with his ſucceſſors on that throne, are ſet up in this promiſe as a pledge and a prefiguration of the Meſſiah in his throne and kingdom, which was the great thing intended in the promiſe. Thus God foreſhewed this great event by things as well as words. And there is no reaſon why God may not ſet up ſome things as pledges, and ſigns, and prefigurations or types of great events, and then plainly declare, that theſe events were intended in theſe ſigns and prefigurations of them.

David himſelf took up this promiſe as intending the Meſſiah, and his eternal kingdom, through his temporal kingdom. For when he was a-dying, and could not have much ſatisfaction in the promiſe as it was temporal, he ventures his departing ſoul with ſatisfaction on the eternal part of it; wherein he ſays, "He has all his ſalvation, and all his deſire, "whatever ſhould become of his temporal houſe." It will not be amiſs here to conſider thoſe dying words of David, which we have recorded, 2 Sam. xxiii. from the beginning to the 8th verſe. There is a tranſlation of the firſt verſe, which I ſuſpect is not alien from the ſenſe of the text. It is to this purpoſe: "David, the man who was raiſed up to be "inſtead of the Meſſiah of the God of Jacob in the ſweet "pſalms of Iſrael."

But whatever be in that, by the deſignations given unto him, and the intimation, that theſe are his laſt words, it appears, that we are called to take ſpecial notice of what follows,

lows, as a thing most remarkable, and worthy of all attention; and the more, if we consider the solemn preface he himself puts to these his last words: for he plainly says, that they are not his own words, but the words of God; and insinuates, that he is about to speak of that which was the scope of what he had delivered as an inspired prophet. Yea, it is more than probable, that he delivers his dying words in the name of the glorious persons of the Godhead, as the word of all the three: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, "and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, "the Rock of Israel spake to me" He is to speak of that great business wherein these three divine persons are all gloriously manifested; and he mentions "the Rock of Israel," the Son, in the last place, because what follows immediately is of him. For it cannot be imagined, that all this solemnity was designed to no other purpose, but to usher in a description of the duty of ordinary rulers in the kingdoms of this earth, and of the happiness of their subjects under their right administration. And therefore those interpreters have done best, who have taken it for a prophecy of the Messiah; reckoning, that whatever be said here with respect to the government of the house of David, it chiefly points to the Messiah's kingdom. The words are variously rendered *; but however they be translated, the kingdom of the Messiah is their scope. And there is no reason that I know of, why they may not be rendered thus: "To me spake the Rock of Is-"rael, the ruler over men, just, the ruler of the fear of "God;" or, "The Rock of Israel that is to rule in or over "men, just, that shall rule the fear of God."

* Our translation is thus: "The Rock of Israel spake to me, "He that ruleth over men must be just," &c.; taking it, as it would seem, for a description of the duty of rulers: yet, even according to this rendering, it may be a description of him that should rule in the church. Junius and Tremellius have it thus: *Mihi locuta est Rupes Israelis, Qui dominatur hominibus istis, justus esto, dominans in timore Dei:* and for explication of *hominibus istis*, say, *Israelitis*. On our margin it is thus: "Be thou ruler over "men." And some render the foregoing words thus: "The "Rock of Israel spake of me," *i. e.* David, who was a type of the Messiah. The Dutch translation has it thus: "The Rock "of Israel spake to me, There shall be a ruler," &c. And the notes say this ruler is the Messiah. The Vulgate version runs thus: *Locutus est fortis Israel dominator hominum, justus dominator in timore Dei.* And that of Arias Montanus is, *Mihi locutus Petra Israel dominans in homine, justus dominator timoris Dei.*

Thus it is a prophecy of David's Lord, the Rock of Iſrael himſelf, his ruling in the church and kingdom of God. Of this ruler, it is ſaid, that he is or ſhall be juſt; which may be explained by the words of Jeremiah, chap. xxiii. 5. 6. "I "will raiſe unto David a righteous branch; and a king ſhall "reign and proſper, and ſhall execute judgment and juſtice "in the earth.—And this is his name whereby he ſhall be "called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Thus he is the true Melchiſedek, and a prieſt on his throne, Pſal. cx. 4. Zech vi. 13. Next, it is ſaid, "That he ruleth "the fear of God;" the worſhip and ſervice of God, or the whole of religion. To this purpoſe ſpeaks the prophet Iſaiah, chap. xi. 1. 2. 3. and the Apoſtle, Heb. xii. 28.; where he ſays, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom that "cannot be moved, let us have grace to ſerve God accepta- "bly with reverence and godly fear." Such is his government, and the nature of his kingdom, and ſo it is diſtinguiſhed from all the kingdoms of this world.

David proceeds, in the next verſe, to deſcribe, by ſimilitudes, the government and kingdom of this ruler of the fear of God, which is as light out of darkneſs, increaſing from ſmall beginnings unto much greatneſs and glory, moſt benign and comfortable, and very beautiful and glorious, "as the "light of the morning," &c. And then, in ℣ 5. he profeſſes his full ſatisfaction in the faith and hope of this, whatever ſhould become of his temporal houſe, and the earthly kingdom in his family.

"Although my houſe" (my temporal houſe, and the kingdom in it, which alſo was ſpoke of in the promiſe) "be not "ſo with God," (as this kingdom of which I have been ſpeaking ſhall be; and though it do not anſwer to the deſcription I have given of God's ruler in the church, or do not behave ſuitably before God, as a type of that ruler and kingdom, and ſo do not abide with God); "yet he hath "made with me an everlaſting covenant," (he hath promiſed to me, that of the fruit of my body he will raiſe up that glorious King, the Meſſiah, to ſit on my throne, and that he will eſtabliſh his kingdom before me for ever; this is the everlaſting part of his covenant made with me, eſtabliſhing an eternal relation betwixt him and me), "ordered in "all things," (to anſwer all the ends of God's glory, and all the neceſſities of the church), "and ſure," (depending on no condition that ſhould any way make it void, as the promiſe reſpecting my temporal houſe and kingdom; and ſo it

can

can by no means fail): "for this is all my salvation, and "all my desire," (I seek no other salvation, no other happiness, but what is contained in this promise; and now, when leaving all time's things, and having no more place in the earthly Israel, I have full satisfaction in the expectation of this heavenly and eternal kingdom, which shall be established before me, Heb. xi. 13. 14. 16.), "although he make it not "to grow:" (though my typical house shall be diminished, till it be cut off; though the sceptre depart from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet, yet it is enough to me that Shiloh will come: though the tree of my royal family should be cut down to the ground; yet out of the roots shall spring that branch of righteousness: and in this am I satisfied, though this should be the final end of my temporal house, that it may never more flourish).

In the two following verses, which conclude those last words of David, he describes the enemies of this glorious King and his kingdom, their power, wicked enmity, and stubbornness, and their fearful end; shewing also, that the wicked shall have no abode in this kingdom of the Messiah: "But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust "away, because they cannot be taken with hands," &c. These are the last words of David; from which we may be satisfied, that the promise made to him did not only respect the temporal kingdom in his house, but, through that, refer unto the eternal kingdom of the Messiah, the Rock of Israel: for now, when he is leaving the world, he lets go the temporal part of the promise, and expects eternal salvation and happiness by that eternal part of it, that was the chief thing to which every other thing in it had a reference; and, in comparison of which, the raising of David and his house to rule in that earthly kingdom, was indeed but a small thing; as he says, 2 Sam. vii. 19. "And this was yet a small thing in "thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast also spoken of thy "servant's house for a great while to come; and is this the "manner of man, O Lord God?"

And this is that promise made to David, of Messiah the King, so much insisted on in the Psalms, and all the writings of the prophets that followed after David, which raised the expectations of the Jews, and of the accomplishment of which they were still the more desirous after they saw David's temporal house brought low? But they wofully mistook it, imagining it to be a promise of a glorious earthly prince, and a splendid worldly kingdom. Unto this purpose they made

uſe of thoſe figures taken from David's temporal kingdom, and ſuch other figures as the prophets made uſe of to ſet forth beforehand the ſpiritual and eternal things of the kingdom of Chriſt; and under the influence of this fatal miſtake, they rejected Jeſus, and delivered him up to Pilate.

SECT. II.

JEſus being queſtioned, denies not, but confeſſes, that he is that ſame King promiſed to the Jews; and by this we may know, from the prophecies, who he is.

For, 1. It behoved the Meſſiah, according to the prophets, to be of the fruit of David's body, a true man of the ſeed of David. The Jews knew well, from the prophecies, that the Chriſt was to be David's ſon; as appears from their anſwer to our Lord's queſtion, "What think ye of Chriſt? whoſe ſon "is he?" for they "ſay unto him, The ſon of David," Matth. xxii. 41. 42.; and they that believed Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, deſigned him *The Son of David*.

The prophecies pointed him out as thus to be of David when David's family ſhould be diminiſhed and brought very low; they repreſented him as a branch ſpringing out of the "root of Jeſſe," Iſ. xi. 1.: ſo that when he ſhould come, he ſhould be "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry "ground, having nothing of that form or comelineſs" that his deſpiſers were looking after, Iſ. liii. 2.

The New Teſtament teſtifies of Jeſus, that he is of the fruit of David's loins according to the fleſh, and of the ſeed of David according to the fleſh; and thus explains the prophecies, declaring their accompliſhment in him, Acts ii. 30. Rom. i. 3. This phraſe, "according to the fleſh," ſeems to have more than one import, when applied to Jeſus Chriſt. For, 1. It plainly points out his human nature as diſtinguiſhed from his divine. 2. It alſo denotes human nature in its mortal ſtate, with the miſeries and infirmities of that ſtate: for he took part with us in fleſh and blood, that he might die, and was tempted in all things like us, yet without ſin. 3. It further imports his being a Jew; for he "was a miniſter of the circumciſion to confirm the promiſes "made unto the fathers." In this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſays, 2 Cor. v. 16. "Though we have known Chriſt after the "fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Thus fleſh is oppoſed to ſpirit, Gal. iii. 3. "Having begun in the "ſpirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh?" 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God was manifeſted in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit."

1 Pet.

1 Pet. iii. 18. " Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened " ed by the spirit."

Thus now our Lord was made of the seed of David, and so of the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; and thus the promises made unto the fathers have their confirmation in him, the true promised seed. But the prophecies spake of his coming into the world as something very extraordinary, Is. vii. 14. " Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth " a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL." Compare Jer xxxi. 22. " The Lord hath created a new thing in the " earth, a woman shall compass a man." There are difficulties moved about this prophecy; but if we can believe, that men may be encouraged, under present distress, to expect relief, and engaged in their duty, by the faith of future things, upon which their eternal salvation depends, especially when these things to come have a necessary influence upon that relief, and upon their doing present duty, (Heb. xi. 1. *&c.*) there will be no reason to question that it is a prophecy of the birth of Christ; and it ill becomes them to question it who own the authority of the New Testament. Matth. i. 22. 23. " Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was " spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a vir- " gin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and " and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being " interpreted, is, God with us." So it behoved Christ to be a man conceived, and born by a woman, a virgin. This was pointed at in the first promise of him, Gen. iii. 15. " the " woman's seed." And some of the learned have thought the same thing intended in the name SHILOH, given to the Messiah in Jacob's prophecy. [See Rivet upon the place.]

This great thing is declared by the angel that told Mary, the mother of Jesus, that she should bring forth the great Son of David, the King of Israel, Luke i. 34. 35. " Then said Ma- " ry unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a " man? And the angel answered, and said unto her, The " Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the " Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy " thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son " of God."

There is a threefold miracle wrought here by the power of the Highest, working in a most holy and mysterious manner. 1. The making the womb of the virgin fruitful, so that she conceived and brought forth a son. 2. The bringing of that holy thing, the human nature, the soul and body of

of Jesus Christ, out of a sinful woman. This man came not into the world by virtue of that command to our first parents before the fall, "Be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth;" for all that have come into the world that way, have been partakers with Adam in his sin; but he came into the world by virtue of that promise made for the recovery of sinners, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the ser-"pent." According to this promise, that "holy thing" was born of the virgin, by his power with whom nothing shall be impossible; and by this means he is related unto his people, that are reckoned with him in that promise, in opposition to the serpent's seed; and by virtue of their relation to this Holy One, they are sanctified by him, Heb. ii. 11. 14. "For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, "are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call "them brethren. Forasmuch then as the children are par-"takers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took "part of the same; that through death he might destroy him "that had the power of death, that is, the devil." 3. But the greatest wonder of all is, that this "holy thing," the soul and body, or human nature of Christ, should be no other person but the Son of God, who took to himself this holy thing, that it might be as verily his soul and body, as our souls and bodies are ours: "Because the children were partakers of "flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the "same." The human nature of Christ is not a person by itself; the person is the Son of God: for, says the angel, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be call-"ed the Son of God." This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh; of which reason says, "How "can this be?" because it can find nothing like unto it, nothing wherewith to compare it, either in the height above, or in the deeps below: but faith credits God's testimony in the gospel, and says, "Jesus is the Son of God;" and blessed are they that believe. This wonderful union of the divine and human nature in the person of the Son of God, may be some way represented to us, in his conception in the womb of the virgin without a man, by the Holy Ghost, the power of the Highest, overshadowing her.

But this leads to another thing spoken of Messiah the King, by the prophets. For,

2. They also set him forth as God; and foretell, that this man, this Son of David, should be a truly divine person; even that person of the Godhead who is stiled "The rock of "Israel"

" Israel" by David, in making mention of all the three. Of this, it seems, those Jews knew not so much, who could not answer that question, Matth. xxii. 42.—45. " How then doth " David in spirit call him Lord? If David then call him " Lord, how is he his son?" They knew not how he could be David's God and his King, and yet his son But the high priest, and they that proposed that question to him, " Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" the Son of God? and condemned him for blasphemy when he confessed it, (Matth. xxvi. 63. 64. 65.; Mark xiv. 61.—64.; Luke xxii. 67.—71.; John xix. 7. 8.), seemed to have some notion, from the prophecies, of the Messiah's being God.

The prophets give him the highest names and titles of the Supreme God; such as, " Jehovah," Jer. xxiii. 6. Psal. xcvii. 1. *&c.* " The Lord God," Isaiah xl. 10. 11. " The " Lord of hosts," Isaiah viii. 13. 14. See also for this, Psal. xxiv. 10. which psalm is a prophecy of the Messiah and his kingdom, who is there designed " The King of glory;" and his solemn entrance into heaven, the seat of his kingdom, is there described; as it is also Psal. xlvii. from ℣ 5. and Psal. lxviii. 18. The question is made concerning this King of glory, who he is? and the answer to this question is, " The " Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." The King of glory is a title of the Messiah, importing his glorious dominion and kingdom; and if this title, " The Lord of hosts," imported no more than this dominion, the question, in that case, would not be answered; for all that is expressed, fully, by the title, " The King of glory:" and therefore that title, " The " Lord of hosts," imports more, even his Supreme Godhead; and that he is " that most High God," besides whom there is no God.

He is set forth in the prophecies as the creator of the world. So we have him in the beginning of that xxivth Psalm; and the ciid Psalm, which is also a prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom, declares him " the eternal and unchangeable crea- " tor of the heavens and the earth." See ℣ 25. 26. 27. and compare Heb. i. 10. 11. 12. and many other Old Testament scriptures might be cited to this purpose. Now, the creation of the world is that work whereby the Most High God, beside whom there is no God, is every where distinguished in his word; and it is expressly declared, that he " stretched " forth the heavens alone, and spread abroad the earth by " himself," Isaiah xliv. 24.

The adversaries of the true Godhead of Jesus Christ, insist much

much upon the manner of ſpeaking of him as creator in the New Teſtament, where they would have the world's being ſaid to be created by him, to import his being only a ſubordinate cauſe, or his acting as an inſtrument only in that great work. But though it ſhould be allowed, that he acted in that work as being ſet up from everlaſting, to be mediator, and head over all things to the church, and preparing, as it were, a ſcene for acting that glorious work of redemption, and laying all things that were made, in a ſubſerviency unto his glorious kingdom, Prov. viii. Eph. iii. 9. Heb. i. Col. i.; yet ſtill there was none beſide the "Moſt High God" employed in that work. Whatever was the capacity, therefore, in which he acted, the work he did, abundantly demonſtrates his "eternal power and godhead;" and that the Father hath no other godhead, but that very ſame which he alſo hath, and can challenge as his own, even as the Father.

His work of creation is not that which makes him God; but it clearly manifeſts him to be the only true God. It is not the reaſon for which he is God; but it doth evidently diſcover unto the reaſon of creatures, that whoever wrought it is the "only true God," Rom. i. 20. And ſcripture-revelation ſhews, that there was none but that God employed in that work; and that the ſame perſon who is the Chriſt, the King of the church, wrought that ſame work. So that whatever was the capacity wherein he acted in the creation, it clearly ſhews, that he is, and was before the world, the only eternal and almighty Lord God.

And when this divine perſon condeſcends to act in ſubordination to the Father, with a view to the redemption of ſinners of mankind, yet ſo as his true Godhead appears glorioufly in all the works to which he thus condeſcends, it is the higheſt ingratitude in men to go about to diſparage him, on account of that ſame condeſcenſion. Neither will it excuſe them, that they are moved unto this by this reaſon, That they cannot ſatisfy their underſtandings, how three truly diſtinct perſons can have the ſame very Godhead, ſo that of every one of them it may be truly ſaid, He is the only true God, beſide whom there is no God. For this is to ſay, that the incomprehenſible God can reveal nothing of himſelf, but what they can underſtand; and they are concerned to credit the divine teſtimony no further than they can ſatisfy themſelves about the reaſonableneſs of that which he teſtifies.

Yet they have never been able to ſhow an inconſiſtency in this myſtery, no not ſuch as appears in many things of the truth

truth of which they are satisfied by Nature's light. And even the inconsistencies of which they are not able to rid their own notions of the divine eternity, omnipresence, and omniscience, do not oblige them to quit those notions. But whatever appears in scripture revelation with the least air of inconsistency, puts them immediately upon that old inquiry, "Hath God said so?" And by this, he that first proposed that question, can easily "blind the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ," the image of God, "should shine unto them," while he fills their minds with the fancy of being or becoming as gods for knowledge.

Now, while they look down upon us with pity or disdain, as an inferior kind of creatures, that, for lack of understanding, or being imposed upon by some crafty spirit, and enthusiasts, believe mysteries, and credit contradictions; if we inquire for the contradiction in that which we believe, they tell us, it is a plain principle in nature and reason, "That "God is but one intelligent agent, and that intelligent agent "and person are one and the same; and so it is impossible, "that one, and but one intelligent agent and person, can "yet be three intelligent agents or persons."

But we are not yet satisfied, by all those words thus set together, that personality enters at all into the idea we have of the Deity by Nature's light. The eternal power and Godhead of the First Cause is clearly seen by the things that are made, and the wisdom of the Godhead is conspicuous in them: but since the idea of personality serves to distinguish to us those intelligent agents that we cannot distinguish by the ideas we have of their natures, as intelligent agents; which, though we repeat them ever so oft, are the same; and since the Divine Being is infinitely distinguished from all other beings, in the notion we have of it by Nature's light; the idea of personality is of no manner of use here. And seeing the idea of personality includes distinct mutual relations and offices, whereby we distinguish these, that cannot be distinguished by the idea of their nature, common to both, (and there is something real at the bottom of this distinction, whereof we have no idea); it is evident, that as the idea of one human person necessarily infers another human person, and the idea of one angelic person necessarily infers another angelic person, with whom he is one way or other related, and from whom he is distinguished in and by that relation, when he cannot be distinguished from him by the common idea of

their nature: ſo if we think of one divine perſon, this neceſſarily infers another divine perſon. Of this Nature's light diſcovers nothing, but ſhews one Godhead, and but one, infinitely diſtinguiſhed from all other beings by itſelf, and that another God is impoſſible. Scripture revelation leaves this entire and full, and aſſerts it fully; but unto this it adds the idea of perſonality, which implies in it more ſuch perſons than one, and reveals three perſons in this one Godhead, mutually related, and acting diſtinct parts, with relation unto one another, (which could not have been acted by one ſingle perſon, or by any but divine perſons); and that in a work wherein the one Godhead and divine attributes ſhine forth more than in any other work of God, and unto which all the other works of God are ſubſervient Nature's light could not diſcover this; but cannot contradict it: for though we uſe to infer diſtinct natures from diſtinct perſons among men, finite creatures, among whom alſo there is no neceſſity for one's being two perſons, ſeeing another may be made to anſwer all the purpoſes for which that man could be ſuppoſed to be two perſons; yet ſuch an inference cannot be applied unto the Deity, without meaſuring infinite by finite, and intruding into thoſe things which we have not ſeen, and uſing Nature's light unto a purpoſe unto which it was not deſigned, and which it cannot anſwer; yea and without a contempt of this glorious diſcovery of the Godhead made in this revelation.

Thus it is evident, that whatever notions we have of the Deity naturally, he that "denieth the Son," the ſame "hath "not the Father;" and he that "knoweth not" that divine perſon the Son, "knows as" little of the Father. The Jews eſteemed themſelves free in the houſe or church of God, and held themſelves for the children of God, which yet they could not be any otherwiſe but by being the children of the Father of Jeſus Chriſt; and his children they were not, as appeared by their unbelief and enmity againſt his Son the Chriſt: yea they did not know the Father; though by calling themſelves the children of God, they called the Father of Jeſus Chriſt their God; ſince none are the children of God but they that have the Father of Chriſt for their father; and God is not the God of any but them to whom the Father of Chriſt is a father, John viii 41. 42. and 54. —— "It is my "Father that honoureth me, of whom ye ſay that he is your "God," ℣ 55. "Yet ye have not known him." The ſame thing, with the ſame view, may be ſaid to the adverſaries of the true Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt. They pretend mightily to honour

honour the Father, and claim intereſt in him, and in his church; while, in the mean time, they diſhonour the Son, whom the Father honoureth, and would have all men to honour, even as they honour him; and hereby it is evident they have not known the Father, and that they really honour the Father as little as they honour the Son.

And thus they do indeed make void ſcripture-revelation, while they pretend to receive it, by ſubjecting it to Nature's light, and holding themſelves for maſters of that light. But here they tell us, we can, upon occaſion, uſe as much freedom with the ſcriptures, and make as much uſe of reaſon in explaining them as they, in ſome caſes; and ſo fall under our own cenſure: and they inſiſt much on theſe two inſtances, God's ſpeaking of himſelf as having bodily parts, and the matter of tranſubſtantiation.

As to the firſt of theſe: That manner of ſpeaking, as if God had bodily parts, is abundantly juſtified in the great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh, and has a ſufficient foundation in his taking part with us in fleſh and blood. And it was no way unbecoming God, to ſpeak thus of himſelf, after the manner of man, with a view to this great myſtery, in the revelation of which he is moſt gloriouſly manifeſted.

And as for tranſubſtantiation, it had never entered into the minds of men, if it had not been upon occaſion of the revelation of that ſpiritual myſtery, of eating the fleſh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. The Jews, who took up that ſpiritual ſaying of our Lord in a carnal ſenſe, conceiving that he ſpake of his body in the ſame manner as the Iſraelites eated the manna, the type of it, thought this impoſſible, and ſo rejected the revelation. But others came after them, who, profeſſing to own the revelation, found themſelves obliged to own, that there is an eating of Chriſt's body, and drinking of his blood, in his ſupper. They knew nothing of the ſpiritual myſtery of faith in this matter; and ſo were forced to have recourſe to the notion of the unbelieving Jews, about eating this fleſh, though againſt our Lord's expreſs declaration, John vi. 63. For they could not make a better of it: they were obliged either to reject the revelation, as the Jews; or embrace that carnal notion, (which is indeed inconſiſtent), for want of a ſpiritual diſcerning of the truth. Even as they that believe not the true Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt, not having faith's diſcerning of the myſtery of the Trinity, are forced to maintain a ſuperior and inferior God,

ſuperior and inferior divine worſhip, a ſuperior and inferior creator, and to imagine ſomething between God and the creature, which is neither the moſt high independent God, nor a creature; or to aſcribe the divine properties to a creature: all which is repugnant both to ſcripture and reaſon. For what can they do? They find themſelves ſome way obliged to own the truth of the ſcriptures; they have not, or will not have the faith of this myſtery, and ſo they muſt take up with ſuch notions about it as they have. Thus they that will not believe divine myſteries, becauſe they cannot reach them with their reaſon, are forced to take up with more unreaſonable inconſiſtent opinions, receiving therein the recompenſe of their error; ſo "profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they be-"come fools."

When thoſe men harden themſelves in their unbelief, or ſeek to diminiſh the great importance of this article of our faith, by ſignifying, that this doctrine is not expreſsly declared in ſcripture-revelation, and that it is ſuch a doctrine, that unleſs it were very expreſsly revealed, they cannot be ſo much condemned for not believing it, they bring to mind that paſſage which we have John x. 24. 25. "Then came the Jews round about "him, and ſaid unto him, How long doſt thou make us to "doubt? If thou be the Chriſt, tell us plainly. Jeſus an-"ſwered them, I told you, and ye believed not." It was a very hard matter for the Jews, conſidering their prejudices, to believe that ſuch a man as Jeſus was their Chriſt, and a matter of the utmoſt importance it was for them to know him to be the Chriſt; and when they got ſigns, they wanted clearer, more evident ſigns; when it was told them, they wanted to be more plainly told; they complained of the darkneſs of the revelation of a point ſo important, ſo ſhocking to them, and that it was never told them plainly, ſo as they could not, by interpreting words and phraſes, have it to ſay, that the words wherein it was told them were capable of ſome other meaning; yet they died in their ſins, becauſe they believed it not. God hath revealed this great doctrine ſufficiently for enlightening the minds of his people, and making unbelievers inexcuſeable; though not in ſuch terms as ſuch unbelievers would have it propoſed unto them, nor with that ſort of evidence which they would deſire who ſlight and oppoſe the evidence that God thought fit to give. "Jeſus anſwered, I told you, and ye believed not." When he anſwered the chief prieſt and his company as plainly as they deſired, they condemned him for a blaſphemer. And

though

though this doctrine be revealed in the moſt ſuitable manner, for begetting and increaſing the faith of it in the minds of them that are ordained to eternal life; yet if it were revealed in any way wherein it could be now ſuppoſed to be declared, we might promiſe upon theſe men, continuing in the diſpoſition wherein they ſeem to be, that they would either diſtinguiſh away the ſenſe of that revelation, and cry for a clearer ſtill, or utterly reject the revelation. But we may yet have a farther view of the perſon of the Meſſiah from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament. For,

Theſe prophecies alſo ſet him forth as the object of religious worſhip; ſo that Jeſus confeſſing himſelf to be that promiſed King, does thereby acknowledge, that he is the object of that worſhip; and therefore the only true God. We find the angels, that ſort of creatures that (in the regard of idolaters) poſſeſſed the room only due to him, the Mediator, who is indeed God, and who are therefore called Gods, are commanded "to worſhip him," who is Jehovah, the true God, the glorious King of the church, Pſal. xcvii. 1.—7. compare Heb. i. 6. And in Pſal. cii. where he is declared to be the creator of the world, we have him alſo pointed out to us as the object of religious worſhip, prayer, and praiſe in the church, on account of the glory of his Godhead, appearing in his great work of redemption, and in his building of the church, and in the glorious acts of his reign, from ℣ 15. to ℣ 23. See to this purpoſe Pſal. xcv. xcvi. xcvii. xcviii. xcix. c. all prophecies of the Meſſiah and his kingdom. See likewiſe Pſal. ciii. 19.—22. Pſal. lxv. 1.—5. and Pſal. xlvii. *&c. &c.*

The ſcripture makes no diſtinction in the buſineſs of religious worſhip, but aſcribes it only and wholly to God, on account of the Godhead manifeſted in the glorious works of creation and redemption. And if there are not higher expreſſions of religious worſhip in ſcripture, than thoſe that are uſed in the prophetic calls, to worſhip this glorious King, the Meſſiah; his glorious Godhead, manifeſting itſelf in his works of creation and redemption, and in his glorious kingdom to be ſet up in the fullneſs of time, is plainly given as the reaſon why he ſhould be worſhipped in his kingdom the church by angels and men. The typical redemption of the nation of Iſrael out of Egypt, and bringing of that nation through the wilderneſs into the promiſed land, carried in it ſuch a diſtinguiſhing diſcovery of the glorious Godhead of the worker of it, as intitled him to the religious worſhip of Iſrael, and made them

them wholly without excuſe in worſhipping any other God beſides that God that ſo fulfilled his promiſe to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob. Therefore this God ſpake thus from Sinai: "I am the Lord thy God which hath brought thee out "of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage. Thou "ſhalt have no other gods before me." This voice was the voice of the ſame whoſe blood ſpeaketh to us from heaven, Heb. xii. 24. 25. 26.

The Father never appeared, never ſpake, but in and by the Son; his word and his ſpirit was with him, Iſ. lxiii. 9. 10. 11. Hag. ii. 5. Of old the Father appeared, and ſpake by him more darkly, while he was only foreſhewing his incarnation in his appearances, and in divers figures, and ſhewing beforehand in dark promiſes, and manifold earthly types, the glorious heavenly things of the New Teſtament; but now, being incarnate, and having come in his kingdom, the Father is more clearly manifeſt, and ſpeaks more clearly in him, "the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his "perſon;" and being partaker with us in fleſh and blood, he is alſo to us inſtead of the prophets, by whom he ſpake of old to the people of Iſrael, Heb. i. 1. 2.

It was he then that appeared of old, and the Father never but in him, "the angel of his preſence," or, "his face." Moſes knew well to diſtinguiſh this face of God, this angel of God's preſence, from any created angel. See Exod. xxxiii. Thus the angel in whom is God's name is the ſame that ſpake to Moſes in the buſh, ſaying, "I am the God of "Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob," and that ſpake to him in Mount Sinai, Acts vii. 38. and whoſe voice was conveyed to the people of Iſrael by the miniſtry of angels that miniſtred to him there. And he ſaid, "I am the Lord thy God; thou "ſhalt have no other gods beſides me." Neither was it any idolatry in the Iſraelites to ſay to him, "Thou art the Lord "our God that brought us out of Egypt; we will have no "god beſides thee." And there was no fear of worſhipping another beſide the only God, in worſhipping him, as there would been in worſhipping any created angel, however commiſſioned by God, however ſpeaking in his name. This is he that led Iſrael out of Egypt into Canaan, and therein manifeſted himſelf to be the only true God, beſides whom Iſrael was to have no other god: for "the Lord alone led Iſ-"rael, and there was no ſtrange god with him," Deut. xxxii. 12.

Now, if that typical and earthly redemption of the nation Iſrael

Iſrael ſo manifeſted the divine glory of the worker of it, as to give him juſt title to inherit Iſrael's praiſe; how much more does the glory of his true Godhead appear in the ſpiritual and eternal redemption wrought by him for the true Iſrael, the heavenly nation, and in "bringing many ſons unto glo-"ry," and in all the glorious acts of his reign in his heavenly kingdom, and calls for the worſhip and adoration of angels and men? He receives this worſhip from the redeemed, and from all the angels of God, aſcribing to him the infinite dignity and worth of his Godhead that appears to them in that glorious redemption which is by his blood, Rev. v. 9—12.

For whatever they may think who know not the holineſs, infinite juſtice, and terrible majeſty of God, and the unſpeakable evil of ſin, as it is againſt him, and that moſt deſperate condition, and dreadful complication of innumerable evils, flowing from the guilt of ſin, and the curſe of a broken law, out of which we are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt; yet the ſelf condemned ſinner, that has ſome true apprehenſion of theſe things, and ſo ſees the great vanity and folly of all attempts to make an amends to the majeſty of God for the exceeding ſinfulneſs of his ſin, or any way to relieve himſelf from his deſperate condition, and weeps becauſe he cannot find worth enough in any creature wherewith to preſent himſelf, and appear with confidence before the Moſt High; ſuch a ſinner cannot put confidence in the blood of Chriſt, nor be relieved from his fears, ſo as to come confidently before God by it, till he be perſuaded in very deed, that it is the blood of God, and that the blood of that man is the blood of no other but that glorious and divine perſon, who is worthy, with all the independent eternal worth that is in the only Godhead. Such a ſinner being perſuaded, by the Holy Ghoſt, that dwells in the ſlain Lamb, to come unto the Father by this blood, will give divine worſhip and glory to the Lamb, without any fear of his honouring a perſon who is not the only true God, beſides whom there is no god, and will count him worthy to reign in his glorious kingdom, on account of that his Godhead appearing in redeeming us by his blood. While men are utter ſtrangers to theſe things, they may have fruitleſs philoſophical notions about the Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt; but they will "hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs;" and may, by a ſuitable temptation, be prevailed with to part with it at a cheaper

cheaper rate than they that have come by it in such a way as this.

The kingdom of the Messiah is founded in his redemption; as the prophets declare, Is. liii. toward the close, Psal. cx. 7. Psal. xxii *&c.* And his Godhead is set forth as appearing in his kingdom, and calling for divine worship from all his subjects. It is true, in his kingdom he hath condescended to reign by commission from the Father, even as he gave himself for his church to redeem it at the Father's appointment, and he is in his kingdom the Father's representative; for how otherwise should the Father and the divine glory in his person appear unto us? But as he could not fully represent him in the church, his kingdom, if he were not an equal person to him, and truly distinct from him, in one and the same Godhead; so, by this very commission, the Father gives his glory into his hands, which yet he will not give to another god. So we find in that prophecy where he is appointed the Father's servant, Is. xlii. from the beginning, that work which he calls his glory, and for which he is praised, even the bringing forth of judgment to the Gentiles, opening the blind eyes, and bringing the prisoners from the prison, is given into the hand of this his servant to be accomplished by him: and then he declares, "I am the Lord, that is my name, and "my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise "to graven images." This servant of his therefore must be the same God with him, who will not give his glory unto another, and yet gives it to him.

Thus the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, "that all men should honour the Son even as they ho-"nour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honour-"eth not the Father which hath sent him," John v. 22. 23.

Whatever be the capacity wherein this glorious person acts, whatever condescension he use for our sakes, as Mediator, we ought nevertheless to honour him; and religious worship is declared to be his due on account of his divine glory manifesting itself in his acting in that same capacity to which he thus condescends. And since the only true God appropriates all religious worship, without any distinction, to himself, and discharges us to give any part or portion of it, or any sense of it, unto any other, on any account, or to hearken to any prophet, though working miracles, to induce us to give this worship to another, Deut. xiii. 1.—5.; and since we are called to give religious worship to this King,

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the Meſſiah, it is manifeſt, that he is the only true God, "beſide whom there is no God."

Upon the whole, we may ſee in the prophecies, ſome of which have been pointed at, that this glorious King, the Meſſiah, is ſet forth as the fruit of David's body, a real man of the ſeed of David; yet not a human, but a truly divine perſon, Jehovah, the Lord of Hoſts, the Lord God, the almightly Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the bleſſed object of the religious worſhip and adoration of angels and men. So he is the child born to us, the ſon given to us, who is the mighty God; the ſon conceived, and brought forth by a virgin, whoſe name is Immanuel, God with us; the ſeed of the woman, who is able to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent; the ſeed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth may find eternal bleſſedneſs; and David's ſon, who yet is his Lord, his God, and his everlaſting King. Jeſus confeſſes all this of himſelf, and acknowledges, that he is that ſame glorious perſon, in whom the divine and human natures are thus marvelouſly united, by his owning, before Pilate, that he is "that promiſed King." And when he ſays, "To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into "the world," he ſeems to point to that prophecy of the Meſſiah, Iſ. ix. 6. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon "is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder," *&c.* Thus the eternal God reigns as King, the church's maker is her huſband, and her Redeemer the Lord of Hoſts, and her God is her glory.

Whoſoever confeſſes Jeſus to be Chriſt, confeſſes this ſame great truth concerning his perſon: and it is a vain thing to pretend to confeſs that he is the Chriſt, and yet deny his true Godhead, or not truly own him to be the Son of God; as it is to pretend to confeſs him the Chriſt, and yet deny him to be the ſon of David. It is true, the word *Meſſiah*, or *Chriſt*, ſignifying anointed, reſpects his office; but we miſtake that office, and cannot ſee the glory of it, nor improve it unto its proper ends, ſo as to find all ſalvation and all deſire in it, if we do not ſee him to be God in that office; and if we view him rightly by faith in his ſaving office, we will find all the perſons of the Godhead therein manifeſted, and concerned in our ſalvation thereby. It is only in Jeſus the Chriſt, that we know the Father; for he "is "the image of the inviſible God;" and it is only in him that we find the Holy Ghoſt, "that dwells in him." It has been an old obſervation, that we cannot think rightly of the Chriſt, without thinking of the glorious perſon anointing,

and the Holy Ghoſt, wherewith he was anointed, Pſal. xiv. 6. 7. Heb. i. 8. 9. And it may be obſerved, that ſomething of the Godhead, including all the divine attributes, ſeems to be peculiarly repreſented to us in each of theſe perſons, as they appear in and by the ſaving office of Chriſt. The majeſty of the Godhead in the perſon of the Father, who is therefore ſtyled God; the infinite worth and dignity of the ſame very Godhead, in the perſon of the Son; and the infinite ſufficiency and power of that ſame very Godhead in the perſon of the Holy Ghoſt.

Now, the ſaving office of Chriſt is threefold. He is prophet, prieſt, and king. And though theſe three offices be truly diſtinct, and ought not to be confounded; yet we cannot rightly conceive of him as king, and of his kingdom, without the other two offices; as may appear afterward; and his anointing is much ſpoke of in the prophecies with reſpect unto his kingdom, Pſal. ii. Pſal. xlv. It is of this that we now ſpeak, and this anointing of Chriſt the King has a manifeſt reference unto the anointing of David, and thoſe kings that were but earthly ſigns of this heavenly King.

SECT. III.

ACcording to the promiſe made to David, wherein we obſerved, that the kingdom, in his earthly houſe, was ſet up as a pledge, ſign, and figure of that great kingdom of the Meſſiah; when Jeſus confeſſes, that he is that promiſed King, he owns himſelf to be the antitype of thoſe kings, and that he is unto his ſubjects inſtead of them, and that his kingdom is the thing we have now inſtead of that kingdom, which hath its end and iſſue in this.

This ſeems pretty clear from Jacob's prophecy, and from the promiſe to David, as it has been explained; and that ſame prophecy, to which we noticed a little before that our Lord here refers, ſpeaks this to Chriſtians very clearly, Iſ. ix. 6. 7. "Unto us a child is born.——Of the increaſe of his "government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the "throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it," &c. It is manifeſt David's ſons ſucceeded him, and ſat for ſeveral ages on his throne in the kingdom of Judah, Jer. xxii. 30.; and it is alſo manifeſt, that the kingdom wherein Chriſt rules, and the throne upon which he ſits, is not that ſame very throne and kingdom where David and his ſucceſſors ſat and ruled, and can be no otherwiſe called that throne and kingdom,

dom, but as it is the thing typified thereby, according to God's promise, and the only thing that we have now instead of it, when the earthly shadows of heavenly things have their end and issue in the heavenly things themselves that are come in the place of them.

The kingdom wherein David and his successors ruled was God's kingdom, or the church; the throne of that kingdom was the throne of the Lord; the people were God's flock; and David's successors were pastors of that flock; their office, however they misbehaved in it, was to "feed the sheep "of his pasture," Jer. xxiii. 1. 2.

That flock of God brought up out of Egypt by a temporal and typical redemption, and made a peculiar people unto God, was no more but a typical flock of God, the antitype of which is that spiritual flock, gathered out of all nations as the Jews were brought back from Babylon, and gathered out of the places where they had been scattered and in captivity; even the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. And the pastors of that typical flock, of whose wicked miscarriages the Lord complains, were types of the true shepherd, who is one for all, and is better unto the flock of God than them all, even the righteous branch that the Lord hath now raised up unto David. I confess I cannot otherwise explain Jer. xxiii. 1.—5. and apply the prophecy, as Christians will own it must be applied, unto the Messiah and his kingdom; nor will it be easy otherwise to explain the most part of the prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom, speaking almost constantly of the antitype by the types. And I question not but it was inadvertency to this that stood in the way, and does unto this day stand in the way of the Jews, their acknowledging Jesus to be the promised Messiah, the King of Israel.

Christians generally acknowledge now, (though neither was that altogether so clear to the Jews who first believed), that Christ, our priest, is in that his office the antitype of the priests that were in the Old-Testament church, and that their office has its end and issue in his, which is now to us instead of it: and this seems to be plainly signified in that prophecy, Jer. xxxiii. 18. "Neither shall the priests the Levites "want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to "kindle meat-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." And it is as plainly signified in the foregoing verses with which this is connected, that Christ in his throne and kingdom is the antitype of David, and his successors in his throne

and kingdom. See ℣ 17. "For thus saith the Lord, David "shall never want" (or there shall never be cut off from David) "a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. "Neither shall," &c. If we make use of the New Testament, which is the infallible guide unto the explication of the Old Testament prophecies, which are not of any private interpretation, we will find Jesus Christ declared the antitype of the kings as well as of the priests.

It is observed, that Mount Zion had two tops, one of which bore the temple, and the other the city of David, and David's throne, for that was set in Zion. In being come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, we are come to both these in the antitype, Heb. xii. "Ye are come to Mount "Zion." In that context, the Apostle is speaking as much at least of the kingdom of Christ as of his priesthood. Let us but consider these places of the New Testament, and we may see this truth concerning the kingdom of Christ asserted, even as that concerning his priesthood. See the angel's message to his mother, Luke i. 31. 32. 33. "Behold, thou shalt conceive "in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his "name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son "of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the "throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the "house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall "be no end." [See Gualter on the place.] See the song of Zacharias, ℣ 67. 70. "And Zacharias was filled with the "Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord "God of Israel, for he hath raised up a horn of salvation "for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by "the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the "world began."

See that remarkable confession of the faith by Nathanael, approved by our Lord, John i. 49. 50. "Nathanael an- "swered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of "God, thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and "said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under "the fig-tree, believest thou?"

See the first gospel sermon after the Lord's ascension, Acts ii. 30. 31. "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that "God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of "his loins he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: "he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ." And, ℣ 34. 35. 36. "For David is not ascended into the "heavens: but he himself saith, The Lord did say unto my "Lord,

" Lord, Sit thou at my right hand. Therefore let all the " houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that " ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt."

The glory of the kingdom of David, in the earthly Iſrael, waxed faint, even as did the glory of the temple and prieſthood, and became leſs and leſs ſtill, as the antitype drew nigh; and for the wickedneſs of them that ſat upon that throne, it was overturned, till he came whoſe right it was: ſo that when he came, he was as a branch out of David's roots, according to the prophecies, Ezek. xxi. 25. 26. 27. " And thou profane wicked prince of Iſrael, whoſe day is " come, when iniquity ſhall have an end: Thus ſaith the " Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: " this ſhall not be the ſame; exalt him that is low, and a- " baſe him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, over- " turn it, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right " it is, and I will give it him." And as the Jews were comforted in their dejection, upon the ruins of the firſt temple, and its being no way equalled by the ſecond, by the promiſe of Chriſt to that temple, and of his glorious houſe, the antitype of that temple, Hag. ii.; ſo they were encouraged by all the prophets, under the miſchiefs that befel their kingdom, and the ruins of the houſe of David, with manifold promiſes of the kingdom of Chriſt the antitype. See Amos ix. 8.——12. referred to Acts xv. 16. " After this I will return, " and will build again the tabernacle of David, which " is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, " and I will ſet it up; that the reſidue of men may ſeek af- " ter the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name " is called."

David himſelf might be many ways a type of Chriſt; but it appears that he was a type of Chriſt in reſpect of his throne and kingdom. Now, whatever was peculiar to David, that throne and kingdom was common to him and his ſucceſſors. If, therefore, in that reſpect he was a type of Jeſus Chriſt in his kingdom, as is clear from what is ſaid, his ſucceſſors in that office, whatever they were otherwiſe, muſt, in reſpect of that office, be accounted types of Chriſt in his kingly office. Joſhua the ſon of Joſedeck the high prieſt was, perhaps in more reſpects than one, a type of Chriſt, and ſome things were peculiar to him: but the prieſthood, common to him with others that bore that office, was typical of Chriſt's prieſthood in them, as well as in him. And Zerubbabel's government was as much typical of Chriſt's government, as Joſhua's

Joſhua's prieſthood was of his prieſthood. There were wicked kings, as we ſee from Ezek. xxi. forecited, and there were wicked prieſts; but the offices were both ſacred, which indeed did aggravate their wickedneſs; but ſo far as they exerciſed their offices with approbation, and acted in theſe offices ſuitably unto the nature and end of them, ſo far they prefigured Chriſt in them.

It is true, theſe offices were diſtinct, ſo that it appertained not to the kings to do the peculiar diſtinguiſhing acts of the prieſtly office; even as the prieſtly and kingly offices, though both lodged in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, are truly diſtinct; and it would be a great abuſe of his kingly office, to put it unto the peculiar uſe of his prieſthood, as we are very ready to do, and it would deſtroy the uſe of both theſe offices unto us, and diſhonour them greatly, whatever honour we may think to put upon one of them thereby, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16.——21. It is alſo true, that the matters of the Lord's immediate worſhip in the temple, were diſtinct from the matters of the king's government in the kingdom; and that the matters of the Lord's worſhip in the temple were ſacred, and the moſt ſacred matters: but the matters of the king were alſo ſacred; the nation or kingdom itſelf where they ruled was ſacred, "a holy nation." The kings that ſat on the throne of David were a light alway before God in Jeruſalem, "the city "which he had choſen him to put his name there," 1 Kings xi. 36. They were church-officers as well as the prophets and prieſts. See Lam. ii. 8. 9. where we ſee Zion's king and her princes, as well as her prophets. And chap. iv. 20. it is ſaid of the king, "The breath of our noſtrils, the anointed of "the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we ſaid, Under "his ſhadow we ſhall live among the Heathen." See likewiſe Ezek. xxii. 26. 27. 28. "Her prieſts have violated my "law, and have profaned my holy things. —— Her princes "in the midſt thereof are like wolves ravening the prey.— "And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mor-"tar." And Micah iii. 10. 11. "They build up Zion with "blood, and Jeruſalem with iniquity. The heads thereof "(*i. e.* of Zion) judge for reward, and the prieſts thereof "teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money." Heads of Zion is a ſtrong expreſſion. See likewiſe Zeph iii. 2.——5. "She truſted not in the Lord, ſhe drew not near "to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions, her "judges are evening wolves.——Her prophets are light and "treacherous perſons: her prieſts have polluted the ſanc-"tuary,

" tuary, they have done violence to the law. The juſt Lord " is in the midſt thereof, he will not do iniquity." And the following part of that chapter will afford us a view of the difference betwixt this ſtate of things and the New-Teſtament church promiſed there, and of the excellency of that church, with reſpect unto the perſons of whom it doth conſiſt. But by theſe texts cited it appears, that the kings were church-officers, though they were not prieſts, even as were the prophets; and theſe were ſtanding types of Chriſt in that typical church. Chriſt's kingly office is not his prieſtly; but no man would thence infer, that it is not an office in the church: neither would any declare, that the office of deacon in New-Teſtament churches, which reſpects the relief of the poor in their temporal ſtraits, is no church-office, for this reaſon, becauſe it is not the office of biſhop or elder, which more immediately reſpect the matters of the Lord's worſhip. The matters of the Lord and of the king were diſtinct; but the ſame court judged in both, Levites and others being joined in it; and it had diſtinct preſidents for theſe diſtinct matters, but both ſet to judge by the king, who gave them charges and directions, 2 Chron. xix. 8. 9. 10. 11. And not only David and Solomon, who were prophets, but Jehoſhaphat, Hezekiah, and Joſiah, and the good kings, ruled in things pertaining to the temple, and the worſhip of God. Such as contend earneſtly for thoſe kings being only civil officers, will not allow the kings of the earth ſuch power in church-matters now, as the kings of Judah exerciſed with approbation about the temple, and the matters of the Lord's worſhip, if they think conſiſtently with their notions about the intrinſic power of the church; unleſs perhaps they were ſome way ſecured as to this, that the king's power ſhould be at their devotion, and under their direction. After all, it will not be eaſy to ſhew why the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt might not be typified by a worldly kingdom, as well as the heavenly ſanctuary was prefigured by a worldly ſanctuary.

But againſt this it is objected, That whatever power the kings of the houſe of David had in Iſrael, and about the matters of the Lord, ſuch like is attributed to the kings of the earth, with reſpect to the New-Teſtament church; and ſo that was not peculiar to them: nor is Chriſt's government in the church the only thing we have now inſtead of theirs; becauſe it is ſaid, Iſ. xlix. 23. " Kings ſhall be thy nurſing fa- " thers, and their queens thy nurſing mothers."

Becauſe the very letter of this prophecy has been vehement-

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ly urged, as expreſſing fully the ſtrange ſenſe that has been put upon it; and things foreign to the ſcriptures have been built upon theſe words, by men indulging themſelves in private interpretations of the prophecies, without attending to the certain light afforded by the Holy Ghoſt, the author of them, in the New Teſtament, for explaining them; it will be needful particularly to conſider that prophecy, and ſee what light the New Teſtament affords for the explication of it.

And, *firſt*, It is plain there is a great deal of metaphor in that prophecy of which theſe words are a part. For inſtance, (℣ 22.), "The lifting up of the Lord's hand, the ſetting up of his ſtandard to the Gentiles and people, their bringing Zion's ſons in their arms, and carrying her daughters upon their ſhoulders." And ℣ 23. "The kings and queens of the Gentiles bowing down to the church, with their face towards the earth, and licking up the duſt of her feet." If there were not much metaphor here, the "whore ſitting on many waters" would bid faireſt for it.

There is not one expreſſion here, then, but what is metaphorical; and that there ſhould be no metaphor in that of "kings nurſing fathers" will not be eaſily granted. For nurſes nouriſh the child: and what is the proper nouriſhment of the church, and of Zion's children? Do the kings of the earth afford that nouriſhment? Do they adminiſter the word and ſacraments? Have they the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven? No; this cannot be the ſenſe. The officers of the church claim this as their privilege, which the New Teſtament gives them, and which the kings of the earth muſt not meddle with. But then, they will beg their own ſenſe of the words: for after this, it is but begging; and it cannot be thought unmerciful, to grant them no more than the New Teſtament gives us leave to grant.

2*dly*, We muſt conſider what is that church unto which this promiſe ſays, "The kings and queens ſhall be nurſing fathers and mothers." And here we have ſome help from the New Teſtament. See Rev. xxi. 24.——27. "And the nations of them which are ſaved, ſhall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by day: for there ſhall be no night there. And they ſhall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh

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" a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of " life."

These words seem to declare the full accomplishment of this promise, and of all the Old Testament promises of this kind: for they contain a description of the church in its perfection, at " the restitution of all things;" and a further declaration of the same thing that is declared Rev. xi. 15. where it is said, " The kingdoms of this world are become the " kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall " reign for ever and ever."

This is a part of the short sum which that context gives of the issue of the voice of the seventh angel; of which voice it was said, chap. x. 7. " But in the days of the voice of the " seventh angel, when he shall sound, the mystery of God " shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the " prophets."

Now, the voice of this seventh angel issues in the kingdoms of this world their becoming the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, where he is to reign for ever and ever; the coming of God's wrath, the raising of the dead, the rewarding of the prophets, saints, and them that fear God, both small and great, and the destruction of them that destroy the earth, Rev. xi. 15.——18.

This is the sum of the things more fully declared from chap. xiv. to the end of the book. And for a more full declaration of that 15th verse of chap. xi. we have what is said in the end of chap. xxi. which represents the glorious state of the church after Christ's second coming, when he hath put down all rule, and authority, and power: " And when the " fulness of the elect of all nations is brought into the " church." And what church is that there spoken of? Surely no other but that which consists of all them, and in no wise of any other but them that are saved, and are written in the Lamb's book of life: for where it is said, " The glory " and honour of the nations shall be brought unto it." it is also said, " There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that " defileth."

Of this holy catholic church, and not so much of any particular church, does this Old-Testament promise speak, as is evident from the context.

Now, let it be declared, in what sense kings are nursing fathers to this church. Do they bestow worldly privileges upon it? and have they any other to bestow? Do they save and defend this Mount Zion from its enemies by their power?

and is all their power sufficient for this task? Are they to look upon this church as a father does on a child nursed by him? And is this church to regard the kings of the earth as a child regards its nursing father? They that would have it thought, from these words, that the kings of the earth are nursing fathers to the church, as they are to the nations where they rule, must find some difficulty in reconciling this with the following words, "They shall bow down to thee "with their faces towards the earth, and lick up the dust of "thy feet."

3*dly*, It is easy to understand, how kings are nursing fathers to the nations where they rule, and to their subjects in those nations: and as it is the duty of their subjects to regard them as their nursing fathers, so it is their duty to behave toward their subjects suitably to this designation, and particularly to protect them in their natural and civil rights, of which the liberty of their consciences ought to be looked upon as a very valuable one. And if the kings of the earth had but maintained this, there had never been such a thing seen in the world, as the "whore sitting on the beast, drunk "with the blood of the saints."

But it is not so easily understood, how kings and queens, in that capacity, are nurses unto any but their subjects; and that as they are their subjects, and as of the nations and kingdoms where they rule. If these nations be churches, the king of the nation is king of the church, and so nurses the church. But this promise speaks of the holy catholic church, and not of a national church; and the New Testament speaks nothing of a national church: so that there is no such thing instituted by Christ, to be nursed by any king or queen; and therefore this cannot be the sense of the promise, that the kings and queens of the nations shall nurse national churches.

Neither is there any encouragement given in the New Testament unto that way wherein some would have the kings to be the church's nursing fathers. For they think, the kings should nurse the church, by providing abundant maintenance for the clergy, and so making it needless for all them that are taught in the word to give obedience to Christ, commanding them to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; and further, by supporting their authority over the people, and employing the kingly power against all them that submit not to it; and by bestowing worldly privileges upon the church, and defending her in the possession of these: thus making a worldly

worldly kingdom for Christ and his ministers, like the lords of the Gentiles. But, especially, the kings must nurse the church, by defending her from the arguments of such teachers as the dignified clergy judge heretics or schismatics, and by their authority pronounce them such, while they either cannot stop their mouths by convincing arguments, or will not be at pains to do it; and the king is to defend the church from such false teachers, by cutting them off, or some way effectually restraining them from speaking. Yet heretical teaching (however evil it be before God and his church, and however Christians, in a private capacity, may shew their abhorrence of it, without disturbing civil society) is none of those evil deeds that the New Testament subjects to the wrath and punishment inflicted by the magistrate: for these are open immoralities, and breaches of the second table of the law; as is very evident from Rom. xiii. which speaks only of the second table; and from 1 Pet. ii. 12.——16. It is not easily to be believed, that the church of Christ is nursed by the very same means whereby the antichristian church is nursed, and by which more of Zion's children have been sufferers than of heretics or false teachers. Our Lord, foreseeing heresies and heretics would go along with his gospel, and the pure profession of it in the world, and that many of his faithful servants would be cut off out of the world, under pretence of cutting off heretics and schismatics, has given in this caution against it, in the parable of the tares and wheat, Matth. xiii. "Let both grow together until the "harvest, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the "wheat with them."

4thly, It must be noticed, that these words, If xlix. 23. come as an answer to that question, ℣ 21. (which follows promises of a numerous church upon the rejection of the Jews, ℣ 19. 20.), "Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who "hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, "and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? "and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone, "these, where had they been?"

If the Jews should be cast off, it is supposed to be matter of wonder, whence Zion should have so many children as the 19th and 20th verses import; and the New Testament declares what difficulty there was about this, and how astonishing it was when it came to pass: therefore there is a question about it in the prophecy, as a mysterious thing, puzzling to the minds of men. So that the scope of the pro-

phecy is the increaſe of the church, by the calling of the Gentiles, when the children of the Jeruſalem that was on earth are caſt out, and the bringing of the elect of all nations unto Chriſt, and into that new Jeruſalem which is above, and is the mother of them all. This prophecy ſpeaks not of the defence and protection of any church by the powers of the earth, nor of their beſtowing worldly privileges upon it; but it ſpeaks clearly of the erection and increaſe of that church which is the glorious antitype of the church of Iſrael; and it muſt be explained according to this ſcope. The New Teſtament gives us abundant direction in this, and ſhews how this promiſe began to be fulfilled in the days of the apoſtles, but ſignifies no other accompliſhment of it to the end of the world. And if we compare 2 Cor. vi. 1. 2. with the 8th verſe of this chapter, which is wholly a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, we will ſee that we are to ſeek the beginning of the accompliſhment of this whole prophecy in the time of the apoſtles.

Laſtly, Therefore this promiſe contains not a deſcription of any office that the kings of the earth are to exerciſe about the church; but it is a deſcription of thoſe of whom the church ſhould conſiſt upon the caſting out of the Jews: for when inquiry is made by Zion, "Who hath begotten me "theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my children?" the Lord anſwers, "I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and they ſhall "bring thy ſons in their arms." And whereas it is inquired, "Who brought up theſe? Behold, I was left alone, theſe, "where had they been?" or, What are they? and whence came they? the Lord anſwers, "The kings of the Gen-"tiles ſhall be thy nurſing fathers, and their queens thy nur-"ſing mothers:" They brought up theſe, they were nurſed by them, as their ſubjects. And thus the kingdoms of the world, where, of old, there were no children of Zion, are now as ſo many nurſeries, from whence Zion's children are brought to her. The kings of the earth nurſe their ſubjects, and Zion has many children of them who are nurſed by the kings of the earth, that is, their ſubjects. Thus the anſwer is ſuited unto the queſtion; and it is no other but a metaphorical deſcription of the calling of the Gentiles, which began in the days of the apoſtles, to continue through the whole accepted time, the whole day of ſalvation, till the Lord's ſecond coming, when it ſhall be ſaid, "The king-"doms of this world are become the kingdoms of our "Lord,

" Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and " ever."

As to what is ſaid in the latter part of the verſe, " of the " king's bowing down to the church, and licking up the duſt " of her feet;" we know that the Lord Chriſt has power over all fleſh, that he might give eternal life to his people; and that he is exalted far above all power in this world, and that which is to come, and is " head over all things to the " church," making all things, even the greateſt enemies of the church, work together for its good, in a way of holy providence, while he rules in the midſt of his enemies, till, at length, when he comes the ſecond time, he put down all rule, and authority, and power, and all his enemies under the feet of the church.

So that it cannot eaſily be made evident from this, yea, nor from any other text of the Old or New Teſtament, that the kings of the nations may be unto the New-Teſtament church, Mount Zion, the heavenly Jeruſalem, or to the dwelling-place and aſſemblies of this Mount Zion, goſpel-churches, inſtead of the kings of the houſe of David, or that they ſhall have the ſame power there that they had in that earthly nation and kingdom which was then the church of God.

Yet neither was it only the government of the kings of David's houſe in that nation that was typical of the kingdom of Chriſt: for the government of Chriſt in his kingdom is the antitype of all the rule and goverment in that nation, under its ſeveral forms of government, from the time of its being a nation, even as he is alſo the antitype of all the firſt-born in the family-ſtate of the church before that.

For that people became a nation by virtue of a divine promiſe, and its becoming a nation was the accompliſhment of a promiſe propoſed to the faith of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; and this promiſe was ſubſervient to the great promiſe of the ſeed Chriſt, for the ſake of which it was given, as may be afterward more fully declared. And when the houſe of Jacob did become a nation, it was unto God a holy nation, a kingdom of prieſts, Exod xix 5. 6. That nation was his people ſeparated from all the people upon the face of the earth, Exod. xxxiii. 13. 16.

The whole ruling power in this nation was firſt in the hands of Moſes, and his government was eccleſiaſtic. When the government was too great a burden for him alone, and the ſeventy elders were firſt ſet apart to bear the burden with him, and to judge in that commonwealth of Iſrael, they partook

took of the ſpirit that was upon Moſes for that purpoſe, Numb. xi.

This nation, in all its forms of government, was a theocracy. God was the very King of the nation; and therefore he was offended with his people for deſiring a king like the reſt of the nations. And though he allowed them a king, as he had given directions about this before, Deut. xvii. from ℣ 14. to the end; yet that king was to be of his chuſing, and the manner of the kingdom was declared by him, 1 Sam. viii. ix. & x. The King was to be under his expreſs command and direction in the matters of government, and of war and peace. So that they were not kings like the kings of the nations: for the Lord remained ſtill the King of that nation, and the government of it was his; ſo it was a ſacred thing.

The judges that the Lord raiſed up to judge Iſrael were plainly ſacred rulers, and types of the Chriſt; and the Lord refers to them, when he makes the promiſe to David of building him an houſe, and of the Meſſiah's kingdom, 1 Chron. xvii. 6.—11.

There were ſeveral occaſional types of the Meſſiah's kingdom and government, and ſeveral inſtances and acts of temporal rule and government ſome way relating to Iſrael, and ſeveral temporal rulers that prefigured Chriſt's kingdom, as Joſeph, Mordecai, Eſth. x. and Cyrus, Iſ. xliv. & xlv. and the like. But the rule and government in Iſrael, the church of God, was a ſtanding type and conſtant prefiguration of the kingdom of Chriſt. It was for his ſake that Iſrael became a nation and kingdom; and when it was determined clearly in David's promiſe, that he ſhould ſpring of Judah, and David's kingdom was ſet up in Judah, (1 Chron. xxviii. 4. 5.), as an eſpecial type of the Meſſiah to come of his houſe, the reſt of the tribes were ſuffered to apoſtatiſe from the covenant at Sinai; and that apoſtate kingdom, if it was typical of any thing, it was rather antichriſt: but the whole government in Judah prefigured the Meſſiah, our Judge, Lawgiver, and King, Iſ. xxxiii. 22. There was an eſpecial preſence of God therefore among thoſe rulers beyond other rulers; and Jehoſhaphat, when ſetting judges in the land, tells them, "Ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is "with you in the judgment:" He ſtood in their congregation, and judged among them.

Something to this purpoſe ſeems to be intended in Pſal. lxxxii. It is agreed, that magiſtrates and rulers are there ſpoke

ſpoke of, and called "gods" and "ſons of the Higheſt." But it is not of all rulers that this is ſpoken; for they are plainly diſtinguiſhed from other princes, and called gods on that account wherein they are diſtinguiſhed from them. Yea, it is manifeſt, that they are the rulers in God's nation: for they were rulers, as our Lord tells us, "to whom the word of "God came," John x. 35. And ſuch were only the rulers in Jacob: "God did not make known his ſtatutes, and the "doctrine of his word, to other nations." Or if we may underſtand "the Word" that our Lord ſays came to them, or was with them, the ſame way as John i. 1.; that is, if we take it for the Son of God himſelf, whoſe name is the Word of God; then we may explain the firſt verſe of that Pſalm of him, and his preſence among the rulers of God's nation: "God ſtandeth in the congregation of the mighty, he judgeth "among the gods. If he called them gods unto whom "the word of God came." (πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐγένετο·) [See Biſterfield upon the place againſt Crellius]. The duties of their office are pointed out to them, and theſe are the ſame wherein Solomon is made a type of the Meſſiah. Pſal. lxxii. 12. 13. 14. And they are complained of as not underſtanding their great office, nor ſuitably exerciſing it, but acting contrary to the deſign of it; ſo that the church was in a lamentable condition under their government, ℣ 2.—5. Then the Pſalmiſt concludes thus concerning them, ℣ 6. & 7. "I "ſaid, Ye are gods, and all of you ſons of the Higheſt. But "ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." After this great account of their office, beyond that of other princes, and grievous complaint of their wickedneſs, and of their weakneſs and infirmity as dying men, whoſe eminence ended with their life, he cries out in the laſt verſe, "Ariſe, "O God, judge the earth; for thou ſhalt inherit all nations." This is he from whom theſe rulers had the deſignation "gods," and "ſons of the Higheſt," even the Meſſiah, the Son of God, who is indeed the true God. It was their excellency above other princes, that they were rulers in God's nation, and that in this their office they were types of him who is indeed God; and thus they are called gods in a way very agreeable to ſcripture; and this that is ſaid of the types is abundantly verified in the antitype, ſo the ſcripture is not broken. The Pſalmiſt, complaining of the types, cries for the glorious antitype; even as, Jer. xxiii. and Ezek. xxxvi. the types are complained of, and Chriſt, the antitype, promiſed. Theſe rulers were called gods, yet they were

were but mere men; and he desires that he should take the kingdom who is God in reality, from whom they borrowed that name, and in whom that designation of theirs is verified. They judged unjustly and weakly, like men; but righteous judgment is expected from him: they were dying men, and their government ended with their life; but the Messiah, the Son of God, arises from the dead, and takes the kingdom: their government was in that nation; but his kingdom extends to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: "Arise, "O God, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations."

In this view of that Psalm, we perceive our Lord's reference to it, John x. 32.—36. carries in it a strong argument for his Godhead, and what is ordinarily pleaded against it from that place is entirely taken off.

CHAP. II.

Of the distinction between the Old Testament and the New with respect unto the church, and of the nature of the kingdom of Christ.

WE have been considering some things imported in our Lord's confession, that he is the King promised to the Jews. We shall next see what he says of his kingdom. And here he gives us a short sum of his doctrine concerning his kingdom; and delivers it so as at once to point against the Jewish mistake, and to satisfy Pilate, that he was falsely accused of being against Cæsar.

"My kingdom," says he, "is not of this world.—Now "is my kingdom not from hence."

Both John Baptist, his forerunner, and he himself, preaching of his kingdom, designed it *the kingdom of heaven*. Thus they stripped the prophecies of the vail of similitudes, taken from that worldly kingdom of God in Israel, which was an earthly prefiguration of this heavenly thing. So they explained the prophecies. And this their explication of them had a foundation in the prophecies themselves. For in these such things are said of this kingdom, as could neither agree to that old kingdom of Israel, nor to any kingdom of this world: for this was the promise to David: "When thy "days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I "will set up thy seed after thee.—And I will establish the "throne of his kingdom for ever.—And thine house, and "thy

" thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee. Thy " throne shall be established for ever." It could not be established before David in this world after his days in it were fulfilled; but after David is no more in this world, it is promised that his kingdom, and the throne of his son, shall be established before him; and in this David professes his full satisfaction, when leaving this world. This kingdom must therefore be of another world, where David is, and where the King reigns for ever gloriously " before his ancients" that have their days on earth fulfilled, Is. xxiv. 23. and not of this world. David himself says, in spirit, that his " Lord should sit," ruling, on the right hand of God, Psal. cx. 1. compare Psal. xlvii. and lxviii. 18. and ciii. 19.—22. A kingdom that hath its king sitting on his throne in the heavens, and reigning before his ancients that are in heaven; a kingdom that is established for ever, and of which there shall be no end, is neither the old kingdom of Israel that was on earth, and is done away, nor any kingdom of this world; but must be of another world, and the kingdom of heaven. It is only in this heavenly kingdom that what is said of the eternity of the Old-Testament church, the type of it, is verified: for if it were of this world, or from hence, it could not be eternal; but now is David's throne and kingdom not of this world, now it is not from hence. Consider Psal. lxxxix. 35.—52.

This *now* supposes another state of things before, with respect to what is here spoke of; and imports, that what is here said of this kingdom was not before, but is now to take place. This that our Lord says of his kingdom, is opposed unto the kingdom of God, as it had been before this in the nation of Israel. That was a worldly kingdom, until he came, and put an end to that state of things by his death, wherein he also laid the foundation of this his kingdom, which is not of this world. This present time wherein he speaks before Pilate, is that time when this change was a-making, and immediately to be done in his death, setting aside the old covenant or testament, whereby that worldly kingdom was erected, and sealing the new covenant or testament, whereby the kingdom of heaven is erected and established for ever.

SECT. I.

FOR clearing the distinction between the New Testament and the Old, as to this point, and establishing what is now said, in order to make way for a view of this kingdom

of Jesus Christ, it will be necessary that we consider God's promise and covenants from the fall of man.

The first intimation of Christ and the covenant of grace that was made to sinners, is owned by Christians to be in that word of the Lord, Gen. iii. 15. "And I will put enmity "between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and "her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his "heel." There the whole revelation of this covenant of grace was, as it were, in embryo, to be afterward extended; and this light shining in a dark place guided them that were saved by the faith of Christ for several ages. Under the influence of this light, Abel worshipped God, in the faith of Christ, the promised seed, and obtained witness that he was righteous; and Enoch walked with God, and pleased him, Heb. xi. 4. 5. When this promise was given out, sacrifices were appointed; as appears from Abel's sacrificing in faith, and being accepted in it: and it is very likely, that the beasts of whose skins the Lord made coats to cover the nakedness of our first parents, were the first sacrifices; and that therein was a figure of the righteousness of Christ covering our nakedness before God, Rom iv. 6. 7. xiii. 14. Rev. iii. 17. 18. Thus the worship of God among sinful men, and their acceptance therein, took its rise from that promise of Christ; and the true worship of God was never without sacrifice since the fall of man; nor were there wanting, from that time, types of Christ, and of good things to come by him.

In that first promise, it is remarkable, that the Lord, laying the whole of the recovery and salvation of lost sinners upon his own sovereign will, and not upon the will of man, declares it is his will, to establish a division in the earth, by reconciling some unto himself in Christ, the promised seed, their head, and so setting them at odds with Satan, and the rest of mankind, his seed, to be conquered by the sufferings of the seed of the woman. It seems also to have been his mind, in that promise, that this division and controversy should be one way or other visible in the world. So it appeared very early in the case of Cain and Abel; and, lest the controversy should fail upon Abel's death, the Lord raised up another son to Adam in the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, Gen. iv. 25.; so that it was kept up some way between the posterity of Seth, and the apostate race of Cain, till such time as the posterity of Seth, except Noah, mingled themselves

ſelves with Cain's race, and joined with them in their apoſtoſy and wickedneſs.

This was the cauſe of the flood; from which Noah and his family were preſerved in the ark; which was another figure of ſalvation by Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the church; and God's covenant with Noah, and every living thing, having the rainbow for the ſign of it, was ſubſervient unto God's deſign of grace revealed in the promiſe. There ſeems alſo to be ſomething of the goſpel in that ſaying of Noah, Gen. ix. 26. 27. "Bleſſed be the Lord God of Shem," &c. "God ſhall enlarge Japhet, and he ſhall dwell in the tents "of Shem." Something is here intimated of Iſrael, the poſterity of Shem, their being the church and people of God, and of the promiſed ſeed his coming of Shem; and then of the Gentiles their becoming fellow-heirs with the Jews, and partakers of the promiſe in Chriſt by the goſpel.

But, leſt the controverſy that the Lord had eſtabliſhed in the earth ſhould fail, when the world of the ungodly are thus deſtroyed, Ham is preſerved in the ark, and ſo it broke out again in Noah's family. After ſome time the poſterity of Japhet, and perhaps many of the ſeed of Shem, joined with the curſed apoſtate race of Ham, in that matter of building the tower. That which they propoſed was a firm union among themſelves, and greatneſs in the earth, a great name. Thus, as the race of Seth mingled themſelves with Cain's ſeed, to fulfill the luſt of the fleſh, or ſenſuality; ſo the poſterity of Shem and Japhet joined themſelves with the race of Ham, to fulfill the pride of life, to make themſelves great and famous in the earth. And this union alſo diſpleaſed the Lord, ſo that he gives it as the reaſon of his confounding their language, Gen. xi. 4. 6. "Behold, the peo-"ple is one."

This confounding their language was a dreadful judgment upon that generation; for, as it utterly diſappointed their worldly deſigns, ſo it put an effectual ſtop to the continuance and propagation of the knowledge of the true God, and the promiſed ſeed among them: and from that time God ſuffered their poſterity, the nations, to walk in their own ways; they became vain in their imaginations, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like to corruptible things, and worſhipped the creature. This became ſoon ſo univerſal, that, when God called Abraham, he was ſerving other gods, Joſ. xxiv. 2. Thus God ſtraitened them by the confounding of their language, and ſtraitened Japhet

not to be enlarged till the time of giving the gift of languages. But the Lord would not thus suffer the controversy that he had established by his promise utterly to fail in the earth; so he called Abraham, of the seed of Shem, and gave him the promise of Christ, and separated him, and his seed Isaac and Jacob, and the children of Israel, from the nations, till Christ the promised seed should come of him.

We must carefully consider the promise made to Abraham: for now the revelation of Christ the seed became more clear, and the distinction betwixt the Old Testament and the New, must be understood in a great measure by the due understanding of this.

It must be agreed among Christians, that own the authority of the New Testament, that Christ is that seed promised to Abraham, "in whom all the nations of the earth should be "blessed," Gen. xii. 3. and xxii. 18. compare Gal. iii. 16. So that here the gospel is preached before unto Abraham, Gal. iii 8. By the nations in this promise we cannot understand all and every one in the nations; nor can we consider them as such political bodies of men in the earth; but, according to the New-Testament explication, "It is a great multi-"tude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," Rev. vii. 9. and v. 9. For otherwise, if that promise should be accomplished before the coming of Christ, there would be an end of all visible controversy between the seed of the woman and of the serpent; which we have ground to think cannot be. See Luke xii. 49.—53. John xvii. 20. 21. Matth. xxiv. and xvi. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 12. The apostles shew plainly, that this promise to Abraham had the beginning of its accomplishment in their day, and that to a wonder; and yet there was then no whole nation, nor any one nation, in a national capacity, blessed in Christ. But this will be evident, if we consider, that the blessedness spoken of in this promise is spiritual and eternal, and must be acknowledged so to be by them that take the New-Testament account of it, Gal. iii. 8. 9. 14. "And the scripture fore-"seeing, that God would justify the Heathen through faith, "preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee "shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith, "are blessed with faithful Abraham.—That the blessing of "Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through "faith" It is manifest, no nation of this world can, in a national capacity, be the subject of justification by faith; and

and of the promiſe of the Spirit, which we receive through faith; and it is as certain, that every perſon in the nations of the world is not to partake of this bleſſedneſs. What remains, therefore, but that it ſhould be thoſe who are redeemed by Chriſt out of every nation? And thus we find out the intent of the writings of the prophets about the nations: for theſe are enlargements upon this promiſe to Abraham.

Thus far, then, God's promiſe to Abraham was ſpiritual and eternal. And here lay the object of that faith whereby Abraham was juſtified, and eternally ſaved; even as his ſpiritual ſeed of all nations are bleſſed with him, in the faith of the ſame thing, that was then to be found in the promiſe, but now in the accompliſhment of that promiſe, as is declared in the goſpel.

Yet there was ſomething in this promiſe peculiar to Abraham, and not common to him with all believers; and that was, that Chriſt ſhould come of his ſeed, Gal iii 16. Heb. ii. 16. That this might be evidently fulfilled, it was neceſſary that Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh, of whom Chriſt was to come, ſhould be preſerved diſtinct from other people, till the promiſed ſeed, Chriſt, ſhould come of them. And of this that was peculiar to Abraham in the promiſe of Chriſt, there came another promiſe, which we may ſee Gen. xii. 2. 7. "I will make of thee a great nation.——" Unto thy ſeed will I give this land." See likewiſe Gen. xiii. 14. 15. and Gen. xv. from ℣ 13. It is evident this promiſe was temporal, as the other is ſpiritual and eternal, and fell to be accompliſhed before that other. And this temporal promiſe was given as a pledge of the accompliſhment of the eternal promiſe, and carried in it a type, or earthly pattern, of the heavenly things of that promiſe. For the land of Canaan, promiſed as an inheritance to his ſeed according to the fleſh, was a type of the heavenly inheritance: and ſo Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, took it to be, Heb. xi. 8. 9. 10. 14. 15. 16. And the ſeed of Abraham according to the fleſh, that became a nation, and inherited Canaan's land, is evidently a type of Abraham's ſpiritual ſeed of all nations, the heavenly nation, that inherits the heavenly country. And the difference betwixt theſe two was typified by Iſhmael, the ſon of the bond woman, and Iſaac, the ſon of the free woman, in Abraham's family, Gal. iv. 21.——31.

This twofold promiſe laid the foundation of a twofold relation to God; the one ſpiritual and eternal, betwixt God and them that believed the ſpiritual promiſe, and all the children

dren of Abraham according to the ſpirit, in all the nations of the earth; the other earthly and temporal, betwixt God and the ſeed of Abraham according to the fleſh; which it behoved ſo far to continue till Chriſt came, as the end deſigned by it required. Of both theſe God ſpeaks to Abraham, Gen. xvii. when he gives him the covenant of circumciſion, to be kept by him, and his ſeed after him, in their generations. This circumciſion was a ſign of Chriſt's being to come of Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh; and it repreſented the ſhedding the blood of that promiſed ſeed, and the putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, and was a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith to them that believed in the ſeed to come: ſo that, by the nature of it, it fell to be done away by the coming of that promiſed ſeed: and therefore it belonged to the temporal promiſe, and the temporal relation betwixt God and Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh, as that promiſe and relation was ſubſervient, and had a reference unto the eternal promiſe, and the relation ariſing therefrom. And thus God made the covenant of circumciſion with Abraham, to be a God unto him, and to his ſeed after him, in their generations (Gen. xvii. 7.—11. *&c.*); by this means ſeparating Abraham and his ſeed, that were to be a nation, and inherit Canaan, to be a peculiar people to him above all people, and incloſing the promiſe of Chriſt among this circumciſed people, till that promiſed ſeed ſhould come.

But hitherto Abraham's twofold promiſe was not accompliſhed: therefore when God gave him the covenant of circumciſion, he made himſelf known to him only by the name of *God Almighty*, able to accompliſh all that he had promiſed. Abraham's faith was exerciſed with many ſeeming impoſſibilities ſtanding in the way of the accompliſhment of both the promiſes; yet it was victorious; and he became therein a noble pattern to all that ſhould believe; and "died "in faith, not having received the promiſes," as did alſo Iſaac and Jacob after him; the temporal promiſe not being yet fulfilled; and it behoved it to be fulfilled before that which is ſpiritual and eternal.

Now, when the Lord proceeded to fulfill the temporal promiſe made to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, to make their ſeed a nation, and give them the promiſed land, he did it by means of a covenant, even that which he made with them "when he took them by the hand, to bring them out of the "land of Egypt," by the mediation of Moſes, Exod. xix. 3.—8. This is called the *old covenant*, Heb. viii. on account

count of the temporal relation between the Lord and that nation, which is done away. It is also called the *law*, Gal. iii. 17. Heb. x. 1. because of the law therein given to the nation of Israel; and the *first testament*, Heb. ix. 15. on account of the typical adoption, and the temporal inheritance, which was first given before the promise of the eternal inheritance was fulfilled. And when he proceeded, in the fulness of time, to fulfill that great spiritual and eternal promise, of blessing all nations in Christ, he does it by means of another covenant, even that which he makes by the mediation of Jesus Christ with Abraham's spiritual seed of all nations, redeemed from spiritual bondage and the wrath to come, by the blood of the Lamb, the truly holy and heavenly nation. This is called the *new covenant*, Heb. viii. because of the new spiritual and eternal relation betwixt God and this new nation, made up of all the nations of the earth; which could not be, without making old that covenant whereby he stood peculiarly related to one nation, and whereby the uncircumcised nations "were without God in the "world," Eph. ii. from ℣ 13. And it is called the *new testament*, on account of the true adoption, Gal. iv. 1.—7. and the eternal inheritance therein given to as many of all nations as the Lord calls, now when the first inheritance is done away, Heb. ix. 15. This is the better covenant; as much better, as the sure promises of spiritual and eternal blessedness to all nations in heavenly places in Christ, upon which it is established, are better than the promises of temporal blessings in earthly places to the nation of Israel, upon which that first covenant was established; as much better, as the whole people within the bond of this covenant, whose sins God remembers no more, who all of them know him, and in whose hearts his law is written, that they may never depart from him, are better than that covenanted nation, which continued not in that same covenant whereby it was related to God, and was cast off by him; and as much better, as the blood of the Son of God sealing this covenant, is better than the blood of beasts dedicating the first, and as his mediation is better than the mediation of Moses. And these are the two covenants or testaments of which the Apostle speaks, Gal iv. Heb. viii. and ix.

Our divines are very shy to use the scripture-expression in this case, and shun to call them two covenants, but think they express the thing better, when they call them two dispensations of the covenant of grace. And they take this way

way to eſtabliſh this great truth, That none were ſaved ſince the fall but through Chriſt, by faith in him. Their deſign is good; but why ſhould they ſhun to uſe the ſcripture-language, and think they expreſs the thing better than the Spirit of God, who knew beſt the fitteſt words, and thereby reflect on him, as if his words were not fit for the purpoſe? Yet his words have a plain ſenſe, and are better fitted to the purpoſe than thoſe they have put in the place of them. He calls them *two covenants*; and ſo they are indeed, as much diſtinct as heaven and earth are; and ſhews plainly, that all the covenanted in that firſt covenant were not ſaved, yea that none were ſaved but by faith in the promiſes of Chriſt, upon which the new covenant is eſtabliſhed. Thus all the ſaints from Adam to Chriſt obtained eternal life, and never one of them was ſaved by that national covenant with Iſrael, which is done away; though, having a ſhadow of good things to come, it was ſubſervient to the promiſe of Chriſt, and to the faith of that promiſe, and was a ſchoolmaſter to bring them to Chriſt, that they might be juſtified by faith.

SECT. II.

THat we may have ſome further view of theſe two covenants, with the different ſtates of things eſtabliſhed by them, and of the kingdom of Chriſt eſtabliſhed by the new covenant, we may conſider Heb. xii. from ℣ 18. to the end; where we have a ſhort account of the difference betwixt the covenant at Sinai and the new covenant, the different ſtates of things under them, the excellency of the new, and the ſtate of things eſtabliſhed thereby; the doing away of that covenant, with what pertained to it; the remaining of the things pertaining to the new covenant; and the concluſion of all is, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot "be moved," *&c.* which is the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, of which we ſpeak.

The Apoſtle is upon an exhortation to holineſs: and whereas the Jews objected againſt the New-Teſtament way of it, that it made void the law, and encouraged men in ſin; he pleads ſtrongly for holineſs, 1. From the grace of the new covenant bringing us near to God, in oppoſition to the terrible voice of the law, injecting ſlaviſh fear, and keeping ſinners at a diſtance. 2. From the glorious holy ſociety eſtabliſhed by the new covenant, into which we are brought by

by the voice of the new covenant, in oppoſition to the voice of Sinai, erecting an earthly nation. 3. From the greater majeſty and glory of the voice of the new covenant, which is from heaven, than of that voice which ſpake on earth. And, 4. From the greater vengeance upon them that turn away from this voice ſpeaking from heaven; vengeance from heaven being more dreadful than vengeance from earth. Other things might be noticed here to this purpoſe; but I ſhall confine myſelf to my preſent ſcope.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks here of the two covenants, calls them both a *voice*; and both that covenant, and this that we have now, are the voice of God. Yea, that voice at Sinai was the voice of the ſame perſon who is the Mediator of the new covenant: for he appeared on Sinai, and gave the law, by the diſpoſition of angels, and the miniſtry of Moſes, the typical mediator, and entered into that covenant with his typical people, whom he redeemed with a typical redemption out of Egypt; ſo that he is the God of Iſrael. He ſpeaks now in a more condeſcending manner, not keeping ſinners at ſuch a diſtance, being incarnate; and his voice now is the "voice "of his blood, which ſpeaketh better things than that of "Abel;" but ſtill he is the ſame perſon that ſpake of old. And it is to be obſerved, that his voice then "ſhook the "earth," but now he himſelf is notably at work, as Mediator of the new covenant, "ſhaking not the earth only, but "alſo heaven."

Obſerve how the Apoſtle diſtinguiſhes theſe two ſpeakings of his, or his voice in the old covenant and in the new. 1. As to the time of them: *then*, at Sinai, when he brought the children of Iſrael out of Egypt; and *now*, in the day of the goſpel. 2. He diſtinguiſhes them by the place of ſpeaking: "Then he ſpake on earth, from the top of the mount that "might be touched," after he had redeemed that people out of Egypt; but now he ſpeaketh "from heaven, from mount "Zion, the heavenly Jeruſalem," having finiſhed his work of redemption upon the earth. 3. He diſtinguiſhes them by the effects of them: "His voice then ſhook the earth: but "now he hath promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more I ſhake not "the earth only, but alſo heaven. And this word, *Yet once* "*more*, ſignifieth the removing of thoſe things that are ſha-"ken, as of things that are made, that thoſe things which "cannot be ſhaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving "a kingdom," *&c.*

There was a great earthquake at Sinai when the firſt cove-

nant was made; but, by the ſtrain of the text, it appears, that this ſhaking of the earth was ſignificant of a notable alteration of the ſtate of things with reſpect unto the church then; even as the earthquake, and rending of the vail of the temple, was ſignificant of a notable alteration of the ſtate of things about the church. I ſhall lay forth what I take to be the Apoſtle's ſcope, in the following obſervations.

Obſ. 1. "There was a notable alteration and change of "things with reſpect to the church on earth, by the Lord's "voice in the covenant with Iſrael at Sinai."

What this change and alteration was, we may ſee in the following inſtances.

1. Then was the Lord accompliſhing the promiſe made to the patriarchs, that was firſt to be accompliſhed before the promiſe of the ſeed in whom all the nations ſhould be bleſſed, Gen. xii. 1. 2. 6. 7. and xiii. 14. 15. and xv. *&c.*

Then was he known by the name *Jehovah*, the independent, unchangeable God, keeping and performing his word againſt all that ſtood in the way. Thus he was known in the performance of his word to the patriarchs, to whom he was only known by the name *Almighty*, able to perform in due time what he had promiſed: for they lived not to know him in the performance of his promiſe, Exod. vi. 2.—8.

2. The church, or God's covenanted people, the ſeed of Iſrael, who were the Lord's people by the covenant of circumciſion, did then paſs out of the family-ſtate, wherein the church had been from the beginning, into the ſtate of a nation, and became a nation and kingdom of God, he being now related unto them as a nation by that national covenant, Exod. xix. 3. 4. 5. "And Moſes went up unto God, "and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, ſaying, "Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the houſe of Jacob, and tell the "children of Iſrael, Ye have ſeen what I did unto the E-"gyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought "you unto myſelf. Now therefore, if ye will obey my "voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye ſhall be a pe-"culiar treaſure unto me above all people; for all the earth "is mine; and ye ſhall be unto me a kingdom of prieſts, "and an holy nation. Theſe are the words which thou "ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael." Read alſo ℣ 7. 8. 9. This was not before. God was not related to his people from the fall, nor to the houſe of Jacob in the capacity of a nation; for before the church was in families.

3. The worſhip of God, and his ſpecial preſence, was then

then settled in the sanctuary, and all the ordinances of worship were fixed and established; whereas that presence of God and his worship had not a fixed abode before: for they built altars to the Lord in the several places where the Son of God appeared to them, when sojourning in the land of promise, as in a strange country. But now there is a settled place of the worship of God; as we see Exod. xxix. 42.——46. "This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your "generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congre-"gation, before the Lord; where I will meet with you, to "speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the "children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by "my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the con-"gregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and "his sons, to minister unto me in the priest's office. And I "will dwell amongst the children of Israel, and will be their "God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, "that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I "may dwell amongst them: I am the Lord their God."

4. By the covenant at Sinai, there was a separation made betwixt all the nations of the earth, and Israel, now brought out of the land of Egypt, to be settled by themselves in a land and kingdom of their own, where they had been strangers before among other people.

Unto this separation served the law of commandments contained in ordinances delivered to that nation in the covenant at Sinai. The Apostle calls this *the enmity*, and *the wall of partition* betwixt them and all other people. And by the covenant containing this law, the nation of Israel was God's peculiar people; all that were not within the bond of that covenant being thereby excluded the church of God, as all that came within the bond of that covenant were of that nation and church; there being "one law for the stranger "and the home-born," Eph. ii. 11. 12. *&c.* Exod. xix. 5. "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, "then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all "people; for all the earth is mine."

Obs. 2. "This great alteration in the church left the state "of it earthly, and did not extend to heaven to make any "change there."

He spoke on earth; his voice shook the earth; but now he shaketh also heaven.

The eternal promise of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ to all nations, was not yet performed by the

voice that "shook only the earth:" for by that voice, the Lord was doing no more but fulfilling that promise made to the patriarchs, which was temporal and earthly; so he then shook only the earth.

However great this shaking was, heaven was not moved by it. All things remained there as they were after the giving out of the first promise of Christ to fallen man: for from that time, it became the receptacle of the departing souls of them that died in the faith of the promised seed; and those spirits of just men were there with the angels, expecting the full accomplishment of that great promise; even as the saints in heaven now are expecting, till the enemies of Christ's kingdom be made his footstool, and looking for the glorious day of the complete redemption and perfection of the whole church, according to that promise, in the faith of which they have died. Enoch was translated into heaven without death, long before this voice that shook the earth; so that it did not extend to heaven to make any alteration there.

But all the earthly shadows of heavenly things to come by Christ, that were instituted from the fall, were ingrossed in this covenant, and delivered to Israel, with many others added in the law of commandments contained in ordinances. Thus sacrifices, instituted at the giving of the first promise, and a holy place of worship on earth, and an altar, and circumcision, were all carried into the covenant at Sinai: so that whatever was earthly in the church, typifying heavenly things to come, belongs to that covenant made with Israel; and all the earthly ordinances that were before, together with many more now appointed, were now delivered to Israel, as rudiments by which they might come to the knowledge of Christ, like children beginning to learn; and the apostle calls them the "rudiments of the world." These rudiments the law put into the hands of the Israelites: and this is one way wherein the law was their "schoolmaster to bring them to "Christ," that they who believed might be justified by the faith of the promised seed.

So the state of the church erected and established by this shaking, was no more but earthly, and there was nothing heavenly in it, abstract from the typical reference it had to heavenly things to come by the promised seed.

For the people that were brought within the bond of that covenant, and of whom the kingdom of God, established thereby, did consist, were an earthly seed, born after the flesh, even Israel according to the flesh. And though there were some

ſome among them "born of the Spirit," yet this belonged unto the New-Teſtament kingdom, and was their preparation for it, according to God's purpoſe, by means of the promiſe of Chriſt. This was of the promiſe of Chriſt not yet accompliſhed, and not of that covenant made with all the ſeed of Iſrael according to the fleſh. The earthly birth, or that birth after the fleſh, availed much in the ſtate of the church erected at Sinai, as to the enjoyment of the privileges of it. But now our Lord ſays to Nicodemus, "Except a man "be born again," or born from above, "he cannot ſee the "kingdom of God;" and Gal. iv. 26. "Jeruſalem which "is above is the mother of us all."

That covenant had alſo a worldly ſanctuary, and ordinances of divine ſervice, the way into the holieſt of all not being yet manifeſt, as the Apoſtle ſhews, Heb. ix. And he declares them no more but "earthly patterns of heavenly things to "come."

The Lord's kingdom in that nation was earthly. It was ſet up, eſtabliſhed, and defended, by earthly power, as an inſtrument in the Lord's mighty hand. When Joſhua was leading the people into the promiſed land, the Lord appeared unto him with a ſword in his hand, as the captain of the Lord's hoſt; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon men in that kingdom to enable them to fight. It is not ſo in the New-Teſtament kingdom, which is diſtinguiſhed from that, by being called *the kingdom of heaven:* and in oppoſition to that way of doing, of which we have inſtances, Heb. xi. we are called "to run the race ſet before us with patience, look-"ing unto Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith, who "endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame." That kingdom of God was managed in an earthly way; and, becauſe of the ſins of that nation againſt their covenanted God and King, it was ſubject to earthly changes and diſorders, waſting and captivity, and many evils of that kind, from within themſelves, and from the nations about. In oppoſition to this, the New Jeruſalem is ſaid to be "a quiet habitation," and "violence no more heard in it, waſting nor deſtruction in its borders," If. xxxiii. 20. and lx. 18. This heavenly nation can receive no damage by earthly violence.

The inheritance of that church was an earthly inheritance. The promiſed land was a ſpot of this earth, though a type of the heavenly inheritance. The bleſſings promiſed to that nation in that covenant, were earthly bleſſings, "the good "things of this life;" and the evils contained in the curſes of it

it were earthly miſeries, Levit. xxvi. And it is not eaſy to conceive how a nation, as ſuch, can be the object of other ſort of bleſſings or curſes. Thus, according to their national keeping of that covenant, they enjoyed this bleſſedneſs in the promiſed land, and according to this the Lord explained his providences about them by his prophets. He does not ſo to other nations of the world. Now matters are far otherwiſe with the heavenly nation typified by this: "For if "in this life only we had hope, we are of all men moſt miſerable;" and, "He hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt." But ſetting aſide the promiſe of Chriſt given before this covenant, and the typical relation that theſe things had to Chriſt, and good things to come by him, we will find nothing heavenly and eternal in them. Our Lord ſays to the Jews, "Search the ſcriptures, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and theſe are "they which teſtify of me." And his ſaying ſeems to import this, If you find them not teſtifying of me, you will find nothing of eternal life in them.

SECT. III.

Obſ. 3. "IN the New Teſtament, there is another and "more notable change and alteration of things "on earth, and alſo in heaven, with reſpect unto the church."

"Whoſe voice then ſhook the earth: but now he hath "promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more I ſhake not the earth only, but alſo heaven."

The Son of God, who, by his voice in the covenant at Sinai, ſhook only the earth, now ſhakes again the earth, and alſo heaven, by the mediation in the new covenant. Then he was fulfilling earthly promiſes made to the patriarchs, as we have heard; ſo he ſhook only the earth: but now he appears in the accompliſhment of the better promiſes of heavenly bleſſings to ſinners of all nations of the earth, for the ſake of which the other promiſes were given; and ſo he ſhakes not the earth only, but alſo the heavens.

How he ſhakes the earth and alſo heaven, by his mediation in this new covenant, eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, we may ſee in the following inſtances.

Firſt, As to the earth, there is a remarkable ſhaking of it again, by the Mediator of the new covenant.

1. He deſcended into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9. He became the ſeed of the woman, and took on him the

the ſeed of Abraham and of David, according to the promiſes. "When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth "his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to re- "deem them that were under the law, that we might re- "ceive the adoption of ſons. And becauſe the children were "partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took "part of the ſame; that through death he might deſtroy "him that had the power of it, and deliver us. He hath "redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a "curſe for us; that the bleſſing of Abraham might come "on the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might re- "ceive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith."

This is the new thing that the Lord hath created in the earth, the performance of that good thing promiſed to the houſe of Iſrael, and to the houſe of Judah, which was not performed before. The promiſes had been long pregnant with it, and now they began to bring forth, when the fulneſs of time was come.

This notable new thing is the foundation of all the alterations on earth, and alſo in heaven, of which we here ſpeak.

2. He hath hereby aboliſhed the temporal covenant made with the nation of Iſrael, and ſet aſide all the earthly things thereby eſtabliſhed; and, in conſequence of this, he brought deſolation on Jeruſalem and the temple. But this is in the removing of the things that are ſhaken, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, ℣ 27. and therefore we ſhall not ſtay on it here.

3. By the doing away of that covenant, ſinners of all nations, formerly excluded by that "wall of partition", are brought into the church by faith in Chriſt, the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth; and ſo they become "a people that were not a people." Thus the earth and all nations are ſhaken, Haggai ii. 6. 7. "Every "valley is exalted, and every mountain brought low, that "the glory of the Lord might be revealed, and all fleſh ſee "it together," Iſ. xl. 4.—9. This great alteration is much inſiſted on in the New Teſtament; for inſtance, ſee Gal. iii. & iv. Eph. ii. & iii.

4. By this means the church hath paſſed out of the ſtate of an earthly nation, like that eſtabliſhed by the ſhaking of the earth at Sinai, and is now a glorious general aſſembly out of all nations, typified by that national aſſembly: for it is alſo a nation; but not earthly, not of this world; and ſo it very far excels the earthly nation.

The Apoſtle calls it "the general aſſembly and church of "the

" the firſt-born, which are written in heaven." Which points out to us, 1. That the New-Teſtament church conſiſts not of any one nation or ſort of men, as of old; but is a general aſſembly of all nations and kinds of people, " where there " is neither Jew nor Greek, circumciſion nor uncircumciſion, " barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, male nor female; " for they are all one in Chriſt Jeſus." Gal. iii. 28. " And " Chriſt is all unto them, and is in them all," Col. iii. 10. 11. For this is a church raiſed, not upon the temporal promiſe of making Abraham's ſeed, according to the fleſh, a great nation; but upon that promiſe, " In thy ſeed (which is Chriſt) " ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed." And, according to this promiſe, it conſiſts neither of one nation only, nor of any whole nation; but is a general aſſembly gathered out of the nations into one in Chriſt, and bleſſed in him. 2. That all true members of this church are the children of God, Gal. iii. 25. 26. And this is oppoſed to the condition of the church of Iſrael under the law, or Sinaitic covenant, which gendered unto bondage. For though to Iſrael, according to the fleſh, pertained the typical adoption; yet they were in bondage, and had not the true adoption, John viii. 33.—36.: and though they that believed on Chriſt in the Old-Teſtament promiſes, got " power" or right " to become " the ſons of God," or to be members of the church of the firſt-born, John i. 12.; yet that was not by the temporal covenant making all Iſrael the church of God; nor was this the common privilege of the whole church, erected by that covenant, as it is of this church; neither was the ſpirit of adoption given to believers themſelves under that covenant, as it is now, Gal. iv. 1.—6. Rom. viii. 14.—17. This is the common privilege of this whole general aſſembly and church: they are all joint heirs with Chriſt, the firſt-born from the dead, and ſo they are an aſſembly of firſt-born. There was never ſuch a church as this before. 3. The Apoſtle ſays, " They are written in heaven;" inrolled there, as being citizens of that heavenly Jeruſalem, and as having their nativity from thence: for they are all the children of that " Jeruſalem which is above," Gal. iv. 26. This is oppoſed to the earthly Jeruſalem, and a citizenſhip therein, the old earthly church.

Unto this church New-Teſtament believers on earth are come; now this ſtate of things, this church, hath taken place, and they are highly privileged beyond all expreſſion, in being members of this church. And this is what we have

now

now in the place of the old national church of Israel; so that there is no more any such national covenant, or national church, as was before this general assembly and church of the first-born.

Secondly, Heaven is also shaken by the Mediator of the new covenant. And how is that?

1. "He that descended first into the lower parts of the "earth, is the same also that hath ascended up far above all "heavens, that he might fill all things," Eph. iv. 9. 10.

He hath ascended above the first heaven, the air, the seat of Satan's kingdom, who is therefore called "the prince of "the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2. He had shaken that kingdom, and made himself master of it, in his death, and is now ascended above it.

He hath also ascended above the heaven of the sun, moon, and stars, and they are all put under the feet of the man Christ Jesus. This same person was before their maker; but now they move under him, the Son of man, "made head over "all things to the church, which he hath purchased with his "own blood."

And he hath further ascended into the heaven of God's glory, where the angels and spirits of just men were; and is exalted far above angels, and every name that is named in the world to come, unto the Father's right hand. This is the heaven which is here said to be shaken.

And was there not a glorious change and alteration there, when the Lamb that was slain began to appear alive in the midst of the throne? when he that was made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour, and sat down with the Father on his throne? Was not the heaven remarkably shaken, when this high priest entered there, and presented himself before the Father, with the blood of his own sacrifice, whereby God is infinitely glorified, and his glory fully displayed to angels and men, and whereby the way into the holiest is made manifest, and all his people for ever perfected? This was indeed a new thing in heaven: that blood of the new covenant was full of wonders, when it appeared there; as the fiery tongues, and a rushing wind, or vapour of smoke, were signs in the earth beneath, Acts ii. 16. 19. Was there not a glorious change in heaven, when the Son of David took his seat on his throne at the Father's right hand, and was "anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows," and crowned with many crowns, and proclaimed King

through heaven, (" Let all the angels of God worſhip him"), and through all the earth in the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, and acknowledged in the joyful acclamations of worſhipping angels and ſpirits of juſt men in heaven, and of his people on the earth? There muſt have been a very great alteration in heaven, when the Mediator of the new covenant prepared the throne of his kingdom there, and ſat down on the throne of his holineſs to rule the nations from thence, Pſal. xlvii. 5.—8. and ciii. 19.—22.

This appearance of Jeſus Chriſt in heaven, as it was, ſo to ſpeak, the filling up of a place there that was empty before, ſo it made a vaſt alteration in the whole ſtate of things there. For,

2. The Old-Teſtament ſaints that died in the faith, and were in heaven before Jeſus entered there, were hereby perfected; that is, they came to the enjoyment of that which they believed and hoped for on earth, and which they were expecting in heaven; even the accompliſhment of the great Old-Teſtament promiſes of Chriſt, and the good things to be brought in by him. They now ſee the promiſed ſeed in whom all the nations of the earth are bleſſed, and their happineſs is enlarged in becoming members of this glorious general aſſembly and church now erected, and in receiving of the ſpirit from Jeſus Chriſt, as it was given to him in an inconceivably-glorious manner, after he aſcended to the right hand of God, that he might fill the things in heaven as well as on earth, Acts ii. 33. Eph. iv. 10. This was David's faith and hope: now he ſees the throne of his kingdom eſtabliſhed before him for ever. And this is what he ſets forth as the faith, hope, earneſt deſire, and prayer of the Old-Teſtament ſaints, Pſal. lxv. 4. 5.; where we ſee they expected to be abundantly ſatisfied with the good things of this houſe of God, which is a houſe of prayer for all fleſh, to which they have acceſs, according to an election of grace. And the Old-Teſtament ſaints have the anſwer of their prayers for the accompliſhment of the promiſe of the Meſſiah, in thoſe terrible things in righteouſneſs which befell the Jewiſh nation when the Lord demoliſhed that earthly church, and in his becoming the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and " of them afar off upon the ſea, or in the iſles." And now David, that ſat in the Lord's throne in the typical kingdom, which is removed, has all his deſire, in beholding his Son and Lord ſitting on his throne, and in being a fellow-ſubject with New-Teſtament believers of all nations. Moſes, who was faithful

faithful as a servant in all the old earthly house, which is demolished, is now farther advanced, in being a part of his heavenly house, a stone of this glorious building of God over which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; yea, that great prophet and lawgiver is now more happy, in hearing this prophet, and receiving the law from his mouth. And Abraham, the father of the faithful, that rejoiced to see his day afar off, is now blessed among his brethren of all nations, in beholding his glorious promised seed. Thus the Lord Jesus, our King, reigns in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously, Is. xxiv. 23. and they are come to the full enjoyment of what they were till now expecting: so being perfected, according to Heb. xi. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 39. 40. and xii. 23. "they "received not the promise —— God having provided some "better thing for us, that they without us should not be "made perfect. And we are come to the spirits of just men "made perfect."

3. The innumerable company of angels are likewise brought into a new order, in subjection to the man Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, 1 Pet. iii. 22. Col. ii. 10. They have received a great addition to their knowledge, and their happiness is much enlarged now beyond what it was before, by being admitted to behold the glory of Christ in the New-Testament church, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 Pet. i. 12. Eph. iii. 10. and by their having a part in this glorious society whereof Christ is the head. For though he took not on him their nature, and though they were not redeemed by his blood, and be not so near to him as his brethren the redeemed are; yet they owe their preservation from falling to him, according to their election unto this his kingdom: therefore they are called *the elect-angels*, 1 Tim. v. 21. They are comprehended in the things in heaven that are now gathered together in one in Christ, with the things on earth, and reconciled by him, Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20. And we are said to be come to the innumerable company of angels, Heb xii. 22. They bear some part in the church's worship, Heb. i. Rev. v. 11. 12. They are now fellow-servants with us unto the man Christ Jesus, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9. And this is one excellency of the New-Testament church above the Old, that it is not subjected to angels, as that was; but they are now subjected to him that was made lower than they for the suffering of death, and are fellow subjects with his servants, Heb. i. & ii. Consider Chap. ii. 2. 3. 5. "They are all ministring spirits, "sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of sal-

" vation," and are preſent in goſpel-churches; and they will appear with the head of the church miniſtering to him and his members, when the church ſhall be fully ſeparated from all other ſocieties, Matth. xiii. and xxv. 31. Something of this kind ſeems to be pointed out by our Lord, in his ſaying to Nathanael, when he profeſſed his faith in him as the King of Iſrael, " Becauſe I ſaid unto thee, I ſaw thee under the " fig-tree, believeſt thou? thou ſhalt ſee greater things than " theſe. And he ſaith unto him, Verily verily I ſay unto " you, Hereafter you ſhall ſee heaven open, and the angels " of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man." This new order among the angels miniſtering unto David's Son in his kingdom, according to Pſal. ciii. toward the cloſe, is a notable alteration in heaven; and it may be alſo noticed, that the angels ſeem to have received ſomething of his ſpirit, for ſerving him in his church, Rev. xix. 10. Thus he that aſcended above all heavens, that he might fill all things, has filled the Old-Teſtament ſaints, and his angels, and now they are the angels of the Son of man, Matth. xxiv. 30. 31.

4. There is a notable alteration in the worſhip of heaven, by Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant his entering there, and appearing as the ſlain Lamb alive again in the midſt of the throne. Of this we may have ſome view in comparing the 4th and 5th chapters of the Revelation, and conſidering the difference betwixt the worſhip deſcribed in the one and the other. Yea, and now heaven is opened as the ſanctuary for ſinners of all nations on earth, and a houſe of prayer for all people, that they may join in the worſhip of the Lamb, and of him that ſits on the throne, with that glorious company above, as one worſhipping aſſembly, Heb. ix. and x. This was not while the firſt tabernacle was ſtanding; for then the way into " the holieſt of all" was not thus manifeſt. But more of this afterward. Only we may notice to this purpoſe, Rev. v. 13. and xiv. 2. 3. where the worſhip of the company of heaven is repreſented, and the company of the redeemed on earth joining with them in it, and none but they.

But this leads unto another obſervation, which is not alien from the words, according to the view I have of them; and it is thus.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Obs. 4. "IN this second shaking, heaven and earth are "joined together." For this we may consider Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20. and this context. And how this is, we may consider under these two heads.

1. They in heaven, and believers on earth, are one society, one city of God, one building and house of God, one kingdom and one family, whereof the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the father, and he the First-born, the antitype of the first-born in the family-state of the church, Eph. iii. 15. The children of this family upon earth, who are but as babes in the cradle, or upon the breasts, in comparison of those above, are yet children of the family, as well as they who sit at their Father's table there. It is one whole family. They in heaven, and they on earth, are not two churches, but one: the spouse of Christ is but one. It is one kingdom of God; and they who were last, in respect of the Jews, who inherited the old earthly kingdom of God, do now come from the east, west, north, and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God. Thus the apostle says of the believing Gentiles on earth, that they were "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the "household of God;" and that they were fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, Eph. ii. 19. and iii. 5. 6. The apostle calls this the mystery of Christ now revealed by the Spirit, even as Eph. i. 9. 10. he calls this the mystery of his will made known to them; his gathering together in one, in the fulness of time, all things in Christ which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. The church in heaven and on earth is the body of Christ, his fulness, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, and one whole building, which, being all fitly framed together in him, the foundation and corner-stone, groweth unto an holy temple in him.

2. There is a new communication between heaven and earth opened by this shaking of the heaven and earth together. The saints on earth have access unto that holiest of all by faith, in the new and living way consecrated for them through the vail of Christ's flesh, and join with them above in the New-Testament worship: and from the Lamb in the midst of the throne, that same Spirit of his that fills them above, comes down upon all the redeemed upon earth; so

that

that they have a bleſſed communion together in Chriſt, in whom they are one. And heaven being now opened by Jeſus's entering there, the angels of God are aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man, the antitype of Jacob's ladder; which is the great thing that our Lord called Nathanael and the diſciples to look after.

Obſ. 5. "By means of this ſhaking, not the earth only, "but alſo heaven, the ſtate of the church is now become "heavenly," Gal. iv. 26. Phil. iii. 20. Eph. i. 3. and ii. 6. and iii. 10. Col. iii. 1. and the context. On this account, it is called the heavenly Jeruſalem. This alſo is the reaſon of that common deſignation of the church in the New Teſtament, *the kingdom of heaven*. And that the ſtate of the church is now heavenly, may appear, if we conſider theſe things.

1. The ſanctuary, or holy place of the church's worſhip, is now heaven itſelf, where Jeſus is entered. The New-Teſtament ſanctuary is not a worldly ſanctuary, as that of the Old Teſtament. It is no more in any place of this earth, John iv. 21.—"Ye ſhall neither in this mountain, nor yet "at Jeruſalem, worſhip the Father." Heb. ix. 11. "Chriſt "being come an high prieſt—of good things to come, by "a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with "hands, that is to ſay, not of this building" Yet this church has a ſanctuary as well as the Old Teſtament church. It has ſomething inſtead of that worldly ſanctuary, which is done away. And the Apoſtle plainly tells us, that this is heaven itſelf, Heb. ix. 12. 24. "By his own blood he entered "in once into that holy place.—For Chriſt is not entered "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures "of the true; but into heaven itſelf, now to appear in the "preſence of God for us. The way into this holieſt of all "was not yet made manifeſt, while the firſt tabernacle was "yet ſtanding," Heb. ix. 8. But now by Jeſus's entering heaven, as the high-prieſt of the church, heaven is become the ſanctuary for us; and we have "boldneſs to enter into "this holieſt by his blood, by a new and living way that he "hath conſecrated for us, through the vail, that is to ſay, "his fleſh," Heb. x. 19. 20.

It was the appearance of the Son of God foreſhewing his incarnation, and ſome way manifeſting himſelf preſent, that made the places where he ſo manifeſted himſelf holy. And when he was actually incarnate, his preſence in the ſecond temple made it more glorious than the firſt, though it wanted the

the Schehinah. And when he is now no more ſo in this world, but in heaven, his perſonal preſence there, in the human nature, makes that the ſanctuary, and we have acceſs into the holieſt of all through the vail of his fleſh.

The glory of God ſhines unto the church in Jeſus Chriſt, the image of the inviſible God. The goſpel, with its ordinances, manifeſt the glory of God unto believers, in the face or perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, who is in heaven, at the Father's right hand, beyond the reach of all the world's obſervation, and is ſeen only by the faith of his people there, John xiv. 19.

The firſt thing that a convinced ſelf-condemned ſinner (for none other come to God by him) has to do with, in drawing near to God, is the fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt, his human nature, that ſuffered, which is now in heaven: "I beheld, and "lo, in the midſt of the throne ſtood a Lamb, as it had "been ſlain." We conſider him, in the worſhip of God, as the ſlain Lamb, now alive in heaven: and herein we diſcern the infinite worth of his glorious divine perſon; and ſo we aſcribe worthineſs to him in our worſhip. In ſeeing him thus, the glory of all the divine attributes opens itſelf to us in him, the brightneſs of the Father's glory; and in ſeeing him we ſee the Father, having liberty to come to him as a father. And in the ſlain Lamb we have all the fulneſs of the Holy Ghoſt dwelling, to be communicated with us, by whoſe influence alſo we thus enter into the holieſt, through the vail of Chriſt's fleſh. Thus we find the one Godhead in three glorious perſons, in this our entrance into the holieſt through the vail of his fleſh. Thus we have the object of worſhip in this heavenly kingdom. "This is the true God, "and eternal life. Let us keep ourſelves from idols." Here it is that God dwells with men, in the heavenly houſe not made with hands: and ſo far as men have acceſs here, ſo far they are near unto God in his ordinances.

The throne of grace, the mercy-ſeat pointed out to us in the goſpel, is now no where but there, where Jeſus, the true propitiation, is. There only is the church's high-prieſt miniſtering, and there only is the true ſanctuary, the true place of worſhip, Heb. iv. 14. 15. 16. and viii. 1.—5.

There is now no more any place on earth, where the whole church aſſembles for worſhip; but they all aſſemble in the heavenly Jeruſalem, where Jeſus is, the antitype of that on earth, to which the church of Iſrael aſſembled, and toward which they worſhipped from all corners of the land. Here they on earth have their converſation, Phil. iii. 20. and unto

that

that place the tribes of God go up now worſhipping God, all ſerving in the newneſs of the Spirit: and there are no worſhippers here but ſpiritual worſhippers. Thus there is an end put to all controverſies about earthly holy places, and temples of God made with hands, John iv. 20. 21.

2. The ſeat of the kingdom, and of the church's power and government, is now only in heaven, where the Son of David is ſet on his throne, at the Father's right hand. It is no more on this earth, nor any ſpot of it, as of old. For this kingdom is ſpiritual and heavenly, and ſo cannot have an earthly ſeat. It puts forth its power upon the ſouls of men, and influences the inward man, the ſpirit of our minds. Therefore ſays our Lord, Luke xvii. 21.—"They ſhall not "ſay, Lo here, or, lo there."

Men of all nations and places of the earth do, at one time or another, belong unto this kingdom; and it is but ſome of the people, a few, a little flock, in compariſon, in any nation of this world, that have been, or are the ſubjects of this kingdom. So it hath not its ſeat in any nation of this world, nor in them all together.

The ſubjects of this kingdom that live on earth, are all "ſtrangers and ſojourners" in it, having "here no conti-"nuing city. And if in this life they had hope only, they "were of all men the moſt miſerable." For the ſeat of the kingdom to which they belong is not here, but in heaven, where the throne of the kingdom is, and their King ſits ruling on his throne. The thrones of judgment, the thrones of the houſe of David, were ſet in Jeruſalem that was on earth, and there was the ſeat of that kingdom; but the throne of this kingdom is above, in the heavenly Jeruſalem.

There is the bulk and greateſt number of the ſubjects, living at reſt with their King. Few, in compariſon, are on this earth, at any time; and theſe have their houſes, their manſions, there, being here only as in a tabernacle or tent, upon a journey, or in a warfare, 2 Cor. v. from the beginning, John xiv. 2. 3. and there they have their nativity, "Jeruſa-"lem which is above is the mother of them all." They have their citizenſhip there, Phil. iii. 20. and their names are inrolled there as citizens of that city, even while they are ſojourning on this earth. Their whole ſtrength and furniture for their warfare on earth is there, and from thence, Eph. vi. 10. 12.

And all the acts of government upon the ſubjects of Chriſt in his goſpel churches on earth, have their whole authority and

and force only from thence, and there they are all ratified and confirmed, or they are null and void, Matth. xviii. 18. "Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in hea-" ven: and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be loo-" ſed in heaven." Thus the diſcipline of the viſible churches of Chriſt, which is of his inſtitution, is heavenly.

3. The inheritance of the New-Teſtament church is alſo in heaven. Whatever it be that was prefigured by Canaan, the land of promiſe, with the privileges and bleſſings thereof, that is certainly the inheritance of the New Teſtament church; and where that inheritance is, to which Old-Teſtament ſaints looked through that vail, there is now the inheritance of the church. Now, that is heaven, Heb. xi. 9. 10. 13.—16. The privileges and promiſed bleſſings of this church are with Chriſt in the heavenly places; and his ſubjects on earth enjoy what they have of them here in their converſation there by faith, ſeeking the things that are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God; for they are dead to this earth, and their life is hid with Chriſt in God, Eph. i. 3. Col. iii. 1.—4. The inheritance of the ſaints, to which they are begotten, and which they are called to hope for, is declared to be in heaven, 1 Pet. i. 4. While on this earth, they are exerciſed with many temptations and afflictions to wean them from this world, to prepare them for that, and make them earneſtly deſirous of it. And the joy and pleaſure proper to them in this world, is that which they have in the hopes and foretaſtes of that inheritance.

Our Lord calls his diſciples, "not to lay up for themſelves " treaſures on earth, but in heaven." See his exhortation, Matth. vi. 19. 20. 21. And the Apoſtle tells the Hebrews, "That after they were enlightened, they took joyfully the " ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves, that they " had in heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance," Heb. x. 34. How wonderfully did the goſpel of the kingdom, upon the firſt down-pouring of the ſpirit, draw the hearts of the Jewiſh converts off from their inheritances in that land, which was before the land of promiſe, unto this better and more enduring inheritance, typified by that which is done away?

The Apoſtle complains of the Judaizing teachers, who were for an earthly ſtate of the church, "that they minded " earthly things;" and, in oppoſition to them, he ſays, "Our converſation is in heaven." They are rare, but happy, whatever their condition be in this world, that can now join

him heartily in that saying of his. But then they had a clearer view of the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, and were more powerfully influenced by what they knew of it, than we. And I doubt not but to the loss of that is much owing our darkness of mind, and carnality in the worship of God, our conformity to a present world, our want of the primitive mortification, holiness and heavenliness, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, so much complained of; but in vain, while the causes of the things complained of are neglected.

From what has been already said, we may have some view of the difference betwixt the Old Testament and the New, and betwixt the church of the Old Testament and the New-Testament church, and how far the New excells the Old. The Jews thought, that the declaration of this in the preaching of the gospel by the apostles, was a very great reflection upon the Old Testament, and tended to weaken its authority; yea, and to make it void. But the Apostle declares, that he who hath shaken both the earth and heaven, is the same whose voice then shook the earth; and that this new shaking is the accomplishment of his promise in the Old Testament. Christians will own, that the writers of the New Testament were inspired, for explaining and declaring the fulfilment and great intent of the Old-Testament prophecies, by the same spirit that indited them: for no prophecy of the Old Testament is of any private interpretation, "seeing the pro-"phecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy "men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy "Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 20. 21. And the gospel-declaration of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that follows, makes that manifest which the prophets were "searching into, to "find what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ, "which was in them, did signify, when it testified of it be-"forehand," 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12. And, by this means, we have the word of prophecy more confirmed unto us, 2 Pet. i. 19. Now, the Apostle here explains that prophecy of Haggai, chap. ii. 5. 6. 7.—— "The word that I covenanted with "you when ye came out of Egypt, and my spirit remain-"ing among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of "hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the "heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; "and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations "shall come."

What the Apostle insinuates, of the voice at Sinai its being

ing

ing the voice of the Son or Word of God, ſeems to be taken from this prophecy. And, in that promiſe of another ſhaking, there appears a reference unto the ſhaking of the earth in the making of that covenant of which the Prophet ſpake immediately before; and the Apoſtle plainly ſays, "that this ſhaking of the earth and heaven," ſpoken of in that promiſe, had been when he wrote; "but now," ſays he, "he hath promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more, I ſhake not "the earth only, but alſo heaven. Wherefore we recei-"ving a kingdom,"——

But he takes ſpecial notice of that word in the prophecy, "Yet once more," and inſiſts upon the import of it; which is, the changing and removing the things eſtabliſhed by that firſt covenant, and the eſtabliſhing of a new ſtate of things, which cannot be again ſhaken, and therefore muſt remain, ℣ 27. "And this word, Yet once more, ſignifies the remo-"ving of thoſe things that are ſhaken, as of things that are "made, that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken, may re-"main." And here is matter for ſome more obſervations.

SECT. V.

Obſ. 6. "BY this laſt ſhaking of the heavens and the earth, "the things which were eſtabliſhed by the ſha-"king of the earth are removed."

The moveable things, as all the temporal and earthly things of that firſt covenant were, are ſet aſide.

The worldly ſanctuary, with the ordinances of divine ſervice belonging to it, ſtands no more, Heb. ix.

The worldly kingdom eſtabliſhed by that firſt covenant is alſo removed, with all things belonging to it. "The ſceptre "is" now "departed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from "between his feet; for Shiloh" is "come." "God" has "o-"verturned, overturned, overturned" that worldly kingdom, which was his church, "till he came whoſe right is" to rule the kingdom of God; and God's kingdom, which is not "now" of this world, is given to him.

And to this we may add the removal of the worldly inheritance: "Here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek "one to come," Heb. xiii. 14.

The temple, with what belonged to it, and the kingdom, eſpecially in the houſe of David, were as the ſun and moon in the Old-Teſtament church: for that kingdom was called a light before God in Jeruſalem, "the city which he had cho-

" ſen to put his name there," 1 Kings xi. 36. This light, this ſun, is now turned into darkneſs, and has diſappeared, to give place unto the " Sun of righteouſneſs," who reigns in Mount Zion, and " before his ancients glorioufly." The old ſanctuary, with what belonged to it, fitly compared to the moon, (as being changeable, and regulated by the moon, and having no true light of its own, but what is borrowed from Chriſt typified in it), hath its iſſue in the blood of Chriſt, Eph. ii. 15. " Thus the ſun is turned into darkneſs, and the " moon into blood, and all the light they give" is far outſhined by the light of that " great" and notable " day of the " Lord that now is," Acts ii. 20.

In a word, all the glory of the letter is done away, to give place to the more excellent glory of the ſpirit and ſenſe of that letter, 2 Cor. iii.

Theſe things were not removed but by the removing the covenant which did eſtabliſh them. And theſe texts plainly ſhew the doing away of that covenant, Gal. iv. 22. 24. 30. " For it is written, that Abraham had two ſons; the " one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman.—— " Which things are an allegory: for theſe are the two cove- " nants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to " bondage, which is Agar.—— Nevertheleſs, what ſaith the " Scripture? Caſt out the bond woman and her ſon: for the " ſon of the bond woman ſhall not be heir with the ſon of " the free woman." Heb. viii. 6.—13.—— " In that he ſaith, " A new covenant, he hath made the firſt old. Now, that " which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away."

That covenant could not be removed but by its being fulfilled by Chriſt, and reaching its end in him, Matth. v. 17. 18. Eph. ii. 12.—16. " That at that time ye were without " Chriſt, being ſtrangers from the covenants.—— But now " in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were far off, are made " nigh by the blood of Chriſt. For he is our peace, who " hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle " wall of partition between us; having aboliſhed in his fleſh " the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances," &c.

That firſt covenant therefore is now removed, and that on theſe accounts. (1.) As being the miniſtration of death, and " gendering unto bondage," 2 Cor. iii. Gal. iv. 24. (2.) As being unable (by itſelf) to juſtify the covenanted, and bring them truly near to God, or to make a man perfect as pertaining to the conſcience, Heb. vii. 18. 19. and viii. 9. 12. and ix. 1. 9. 15. and x. 1. 2. 16. 17. (3.) As affording only

ly a ſhadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, but vailing them, 2 Cor. iii. Heb. x. 1. and viii. 7. 9. 11. And ſo not being able to make God manifeſt to all the covenanted people. (4.) As not being able to make the covenanted people holy, and truly obedient to God, nor to keep them for ever in ſubjection to him, 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. viii. 9. 10. (5.) As being worldly, and not ſpiritual and heavenly, 2. Cor. iii. Gal. iii. 3. and Col. ii. 8. 20. (6.) As being a wall of partition betwixt the covenanted nation, and all other people, excluding all them that came not within the bond of it, from the church of God, and from hope in the promiſe of Chriſt, Eph. ii. 11.—14.

By the aboliſhing of this covenant, the earthly ſeed, the earthly nation, that ſtood related to God by it, are likewiſe removed, Gal. iv. 30. 31. John viii. 33.—36. and Heb. viii. 6.—13. And if that people come in again, as no doubt the elect among them will, they muſt come in upon another and more durable footing; even the ſame upon which the ſpiritual ſeed of Abraham in all nations ſtand eternally related to God.

Obſ. 7. "The things that are eſtabliſhed by this ſhaking "of the heavens and the earth, are things that muſt remain."

And what are theſe things that cannot be ſhaken, and therefore remain?

1. All that was ſpiritual and eternal in the word and promiſes of God, and in the experience of the ſaints, ſtands and remains in and by the new covenant. As we obſerved before, that all that was earthly and typical about the church of God, from the fall of man, was carried into the covenant at Sinai, the old teſtament; ſo now we may obſerve, that all that was ſpiritual of old ſtands and is eſtabliſhed in the new covenant: "All the promiſes of God are yea and amen "in Chriſt," 2 Cor. i. 20. The promiſe of the ſeed of the woman, the enmity betwixt the two ſeeds, and the victory of the woman's ſeed; the promiſe of the ſeed of Abraham, and of eternal bleſſedneſs to all the nations in him; the promiſe of the ſeed of David to ſit on his throne, and rule the true Iſrael, the true kingdom of God, for evermore, with all the promiſes and prophecies explaining and enlarging upon theſe, ſtand good in the accompliſhment of them, by this ſhaking of the earth and heaven; and all they who died in the faith of theſe promiſes, have reached the end of their faith, and remain in the New-Teſtament church, to enjoy eternally that which they believed and hoped for.

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2. The moral law, the ſame for ſubſtance under all covenants, and which has been in all the covenants that God made with men, ſtands and remains here, and is written, not on tables of ſtone, but in the hearts of all them that are within the bond of this covenant, that they may never depart from God.

This eternal rule of righteouſneſs could not be ſhaken, Matth. v. 17. 19.; but as it was always ſuited to the manifeſtation God made of himſelf in the covenants he entered into with man; ſo the New-Teſtament revelation being the cleareſt and fulleſt, and making known what before was hid in God, makes that law ſuitable to itſelf; and therefore it is given in the New Teſtament in another and more excellent manner than it was given to Adam, or the children of Iſrael at Sinai. It would be long to declare this fully, we ſhall only notice, that the moral law ſtands in the new covenant, delivered by the Lord Redeemer to the church, and we have it in this covenant, together with the inſtitutions of Chriſt, under the covert of his blood, even as the book of the law in the firſt covenant was ſprinkled with the blood of the ſacrifices, Heb. ix. 19. 20. 23. And to engage to do the duties required in the law any otherwiſe but as the law ſtands in the new covenant, ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, is to engage to fulfiil the covenant of works ſome way, and ſo to ſubject ourſelves to the curſe; and therefore there can be no ſuch thing as a covenant of duties between God and us under the New Teſtament, diſtinct from the New Teſtament which is in Chriſt's blood. The obedience of the Lord's covenanted people is better ſecured in the new covenant than ever it was before, either in the covenant made with mankind in the firſt Adam, or in the covenants made with Iſrael after the fleſh: for now he puts his laws into their mind, and writes them in their hearts: and as their obedience is thereby, and in its own nature, more ſpiritual, and more free; ſo, when they are perfected, as they will infallibly be, their obedience will very far excel, not only Iſrael's poor ſervice, in the "oldneſs of the letter," but Adam's obedience before he fell. And how much more excellent is conformity to the ſecond Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, in our obedience, by his Spirit, than conformity to the firſt Adam, even while innocent, by our natural powers?

3. When the types, the ſhadows, are fled away, and the patterns of heavenly things are ſhaken off, the heavenly things

things themſelves, the ſubſtances of theſe ſhadows, ſtand by the new covenant, and remain eſtabliſhed for ever.

The original word rendered *removed*, may import *tranſlated*; and we may make this obſerve upon it, "That whatever was excellent in the types, we have it unto much better advantage in the antitype, when the types are ſet aſide." For here we have heavenly things for earthly, and the things themſelves eſtabliſhed to remain for ever, when the figures and patterns of them are done away.

Here is the eternal covenant, ſealed with the blood of the Son of God, inſtead of that earthly temporal covenant, dedicated with the blood of beaſts: A covenant more ſure, more efficacious, more extenſive, eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, and having a better people covenanted.

Here is the glorious heavenly ſanctuary inſtead of that worldly figure of it, and ordinances of divine ſervice more pure, ſpiritual, and heavenly, wherein we have a more glorious diſcovery of the living God in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, and more intimate nearneſs with him. This ſanctuary is a houſe of prayer for all people, and it hath more excellent worſhippers than the old, and ſhall ſtand for ever.

Here alſo is the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto"; even the inheritance which the Father gave to his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and of which he took poſſeſſion for himſelf and his people, when he aſcended, that they might enjoy it with him for evermore.

And here is the true kingdom, not earthly, as of old, but heavenly; and managed, not by dying men, but by Jeſus, the true God, manifeſt in the fleſh, and that has ariſen from the dead to judge the earth, and to inherit all nations, Pſal. lxxxii. 8.: A more excellent kingdom for power and glory, number of ſubjects, and their quality, proſperity, and peace; and for ſtability. Of this kingdom there ſhall be no end, for it hath the things that cannot be moved.

But againſt this it may be objected, Shall not this kingdom, and the things of it, be moved at the ſecond coming of Chriſt? and will there not be a new ſtate of things, when he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to the Father? How is it then ſaid, that this is an everlaſting kingdom, and that this ſtate of things will remain for ever?

Anſ. 1. It is evident, at leaſt, this kingdom, and the things eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed in the ſhaking of the heavens and earth, will remain until the conſummation of all things.

2. Theſe things that thus remain will, at that time, have their perfection; ſo that will not be another ſtate of the church, but the perfection of this that now is; even as the ſetting aſide of the tabernacle, and building the temple, and the glory of the kingdom under Solomon, after the people were ſettled in the land of promiſe, made not another ſtate of that church, but was the perfection of that ſtate which was before. So we ſee ſometimes the Apoſtle ſpeaks of our being come to the heavenly Jeruſalem, and receiving this kingdom already; and ſometimes ſays, "It is to come," and that we "ſeek this city to come:" for though we be come to it, and it be already ſet up; yet it will not appear till then, nor will it till then be perfected; and ſo we ſeek it and expect it as to come.

Now, whatſoever things they be that ſhall then be done away, they are ſuch things as belong unto the imperfection of this ſtate of the church; and when the full perfection of this ſtate is come, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt, then the things that attended it while not yet perfected, will be no more. Of this ſort are the preaching of the goſpel, and the inſtitutions of the New Teſtament for the ſubjects of this kingdom ſojourning on earth, which are to continue only till the end of the world, Eph. iv. 10.—13. We may alſo notice what the Apoſtle ſays, 1 Cor. xiii. 9.—12. "For we "know in part, and we propheſy in part; but when that "which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall "be done away. When I was a child, I ſpake as a child, "I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I "became a man, I put away childiſh things. For now we "ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now I "know in part, but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am "known."

The ſubjects of the Son of God, ſo far as they are ſubject to him, are ſubjected to the Father, who is excepted in putting all things under him, for this purpoſe, that the things ſubjected to the Son may be thereby ſubject to him, who is repreſented by the Son in his kingdom. But though the ſubjects of Chriſt, who are his members, be thus ſubject to the Father; yet they are not fully ſubjected to him, while the enemies of his Son's kingdom remain, or while he rules in the midſt of his enemies, and his people are not totally delivered from them. But when Chriſt ſhall have fully deſtroyed his

his enemies, and put them under the feet of his members, as they are already under his own feet personally considered, and fully subjected all his members to the Father, then he shall rule no more in the midst of his enemies, or for bringing his people in subjection to the Father: for then will he deliver up that commission fulfilled, and deliver them up perfectly subjected to the Father in himself their head. And then, when that which belonged to the imperfection of this kingdom is ended, this kingdom will be in its perfection, and the subjects remain for ever in perfect subjection to the Father in the Son, their head, from whom the whole body has that denomination, *the Son*, as being all joint heirs with him, and as being his members, even as the whole body, the church, is called *Christ*, 1 Cor. xii. 12. God is already in all those who are members of Christ's body the church; but is not yet all in them, while they remain unperfected, and while the last enemy is not destroyed; neither yet is he in all those who are designed by him for being members of the church; but when the last enemy is destroyed, and God is "all in all, "and every one of them," this will be the perfection of the state wherein they were before; "only that which is in part "shall be done away, when that which is perfect is come," 1 Cor. xv. 24.—28.

The temple of God that is now a-building, and is all receiving stability, unity and order, glory and beauty, from that glorious foundation and corner-stone Christ, and is growing in him unto a holy temple; when it is fully built and finished, will not be another building, but this same perfected, and it will stand perfect for ever, as a holy temple in him the Lord, even as it is "now fitly framed together, and growing "in him," Eph. ii. 20. 21.

3. Christ, the head of the church, is already in the possession of that glorious perfection of this state unto which his people shall then come in fellowship with him; for their perfection will consist in their conformity to him, and communion with him, in that which he now possesses, John iii. 2. Col. iii. 3. 4. Seeing then he is perfected, and will remain so for ever, the perfection of his members, in fellowship with him, in that whereof he is already possessed for them, will not be another state of the church, but the perfection of this same which hath taken place by the shaking of the heaven and the earth; so then the state of the church, raised by this last shaking, must remain for ever, must grow unto perfection, but can never be done away.

Obſ. 8. " The things removed were moveable, as being " made things; but the things that remain are unmoveable, " and cannot be ſhaken."

This is the reaſon of the removing the things that are ſhaken, and of the remaining of the things eſtabliſhed by the ſhaking of heaven and earth. The things removed were, in their own nature, moveable; but the things that remain are things " that cannot be ſhaken," 1 Pet. i. 24. 25.

For, 1. The things removed were merely created things; but the things that remain have ſomething uncreated in them.

The blood of the Old Teſtament was the blood of mere creatures, and all their ſacrifices were mere creatures; but the blood ſealing the New Teſtament is the " blood of God," and the ſacrifice is divine, Heb. ix. & x.

They that ſat on the throne of the Lord in that his earthly kingdom were mere men; but the Son of man, who ſits in the throne of his kingdom, is " Jehovah, the Lord of hoſts, " Jehovah our righteouſneſs."

The prieſts that miniſtered in the worldly ſanctuary were weak dying men; but the miniſter of the heavenly ſanctuary is the eternal Son of God, " able to ſave to the uttermoſt all " that come to God by him," Heb. iv. 14. 15. and vii.

The inheritance of the earthly church was a ſpot of this earth flowing with milk and honey, and abounding in earthly good things; but the inheritance of this church is " all the " fulneſs of God."

The glory of the Old-Teſtament church, even that within the vail, was no more but a created thing; but here the uncreated glory of the inviſible God ſhines in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt: and this is the glory of the New-Teſtament church 2 Cor. iii.

2. The things removed were of this building, earthly things made on earth, and many of them made with mens hands; ſo they might be ſhaken: but the things remaining are ſpiritual and heavenly, not of this building, nor made with hands, and therefore cannot be ſhaken.

The things of the Jewiſh church were earthly, made on earth. The law, though written with the finger of God, yet it was written and ingraven only in ſtones; and this ingraving, however durable, could be done away. The ſtones were broken by Moſes; and when renewed, they might be defaced by time, and deſtroyed; as they were at length. But now the law of Chriſt is written in the hearts of his ſubjects, with the Spirit of the living God, ſent down from heaven with

with the gospel, dwelling and abiding in them for ever: and this can never be done away: "I will put my fear in their "hearts, they shall never depart from me."

The things done away, the tabernacle and temple, were the work of mens hands: the things that remain are not made with hands, having God himself for the builder and maker of them; and are eternal in the heavens; and so they cannot be shaken.

3. The things removed were moveable, if we consider the end of their make, and the purpose for which they were made. They were made as a figure for the time then present, and as patterns of the heavenly things, that now take place; but the things that remain are the things prefigured by them; and so it behoved the shadows of good things to come to give place to the good things themselves, or the very image of them, Heb. ix. & x.

SECT. VI.

IN ℣ 28. we have the application of all this: "Wherefore "we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us "have grace," (or rather, hold the grace) "whereby we may "serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

The Apostle here tells us, that this is the great product of this shaking of the heaven and the earth, and this is what is come out of it to us; we have received an immoveable kingdom.

He designs this new state of things *a kingdom*; and this designation is common to that which is removed, and to this: for by the shaking of the earth, Israel after the flesh became the kingdom of God; and by the shaking of the earth, and also heaven, the kingdom of God being taken from them, the true Israel are God's kingdom, which being prefigured by the former, goes under the same name. This new state of the church is set forth both in the Old Testament and the New under the notion of a kingdom. Thus it is most frequently represented in the writings of the prophets, and after the promise to David, it was still expected by the saints under this notion. When our Lord came, the Jews were full of expectations and inquiries about the kingdom of God that should come. John Baptist, and the Lord himself, in his ministry on earth, made constant use of this same designation; only, as we have noticed, they corrected the error of the Jews, by calling it *the kingdom of heaven*; and this was the

great subject of their preaching: "The kingdom of heaven "is at hand." The gospel is designed *the gospel of the kingdom*; and they that preached the gospel, after our Lord's ascension, and the down-pouring of the Spirit, preached "the "things concerning the kingdom of God." Acts viii. 12. and xx. 25. and xxviii. 31. So that this is the most notour and common designation of this new state of things, a sacred notion of the New-Testament church, the antitype of the Old; and it ought to be more insisted on by them that preach the gospel, if they would copy after the first preachers, and if they would indeed preach the gospel of the kingdom, than ordinarily it is now, when the ancient knowledge of this mystery of Christ seems almost extinct.

Truly the New-Testament church fully answers this designation. Here is the king, the mighty one, on whom our help is laid, chosen out of the people; their glorious one of themselves, their governor proceeding from the midst of them, and with whom none among the sons of the mighty can be compared. Here are the best subjects, gloriously united, and separated from other people, Numb xxiii. 9. and an order and government infinitely excelling that of all other kingdoms; absolute government without compulsion or oppression; perfect liberty, and a willing people, without any confusion or disorder; a government of rich grace, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life; unparallellable laws, written on the hearts of the subjects; and most righteous judgment, rendering unto every one according to his works. Here is glorious power, for the defence, and for the enlargement of the kingdom, and for the destruction of its enemies, Psal. cx. lxviii. 17. 18. This is the King against whom there is no rising up with success: "The enemy shall not exact "upon him, nor the son of mischief wrong him." See Is. xxxiii. 20.—24.

This is the kingdom of God; his peculiar treasure, his portion and inheritance. Here, and no where else, is he known and enjoyed; here only has he cordial subjects; and here it is only that he is worshipped and served according to his mind and will in his holy place: "Why do ye leap, ye high "mountains? This is the hill which God desireth to dwell "in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever. God is in his "holy place, as in Sinai; let us hold the grace, whereby "we may serve him with reverence and godly fear."

This is the Father's kingdom; and all his people, the bre-

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thren of his dear Son, their brother-ranſomer, are his children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt Jeſus.

But we do not yet ſee the glory of this kingdom, which muſt be hid from the world, till the new Jeruſalem come down from heaven at the ſecond coming of Jeſus Chriſt; we only believe the holy catholic church. And why is it that we affect a temporal kingdom of God, but becauſe we abide not in the lively faith of this glorious inviſible kingdom, and mind not heavenly things, nor converſe in heaven as we ought? By this means came the earthly kingdom of Anti-chriſt, where we have the uniformity of the letter, inſtead of the unity of the faith, and the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace; human authority with tyrannical and worldly power, inſtead of the authority and ſpiritual and heavenly power of the Lord Jeſus; and worldly ſplendor and glory, a worldly inheritance, inſtead of the ſpiritual glory of the kingdom of Chriſt, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints. "Up, make us gods," ſaid they; "for as for "this Moſes, we know not what is become of him." And then of this myſtery of iniquity, ſet up inſtead of, and in oppoſition unto the myſtery of the kingdom of heaven, it was ſaid, "This is the holy catholic church;" and the men of this world bow down to this idol, and worſhip it. But the Lord of the church will utterly deſtroy this idol, and every thing that remains of it in the earth, by the brightneſs of his glorious ſecond coming, when the holy catholic church ſhall appear, and this after he has conſumed and waſted that abomination with the ſpirit of his mouth, in the goſpel of the kindom.

Now, the Apoſtle infers from what he had before ſaid, that this kingdom cannot be moved; and ſo it excels the old in all thoſe reſpects wherein it is immoveable. It is eaſy to perceive, by what has been already ſaid, that it cannot be moved; and further, it is plain, that a kingdom ſet up by God, for the deſtruction of all its enemies, and unto the advantage of which he is making all things, even the oppoſition of enemies, to work together, "can never be moved." A kingdom founded in redemption from the curſe of God, and where his mercy that endureth for ever, his grace that faileth never, reigns unto eternal life, and that hath its ſeat in heaven, can never be moved by any oppoſition from any quarter, or any evil within itſelf. And truly, there is nothing certain, nothing ſafe, but in this kingdom.

The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of himſelf, and other New-Teſta-

ment

ment believers in his day, says of this kingdom, "We have "received it;" as he had said, ℣ 22. "Ye are come unto "Mount Zion," &c. And this is the advantage that New-Testament believers have by this shaking of the earth, and also heaven. John the Baptist said of this kingdom, in his ministry, "It is at hand;" and while our Lord said the same thing, he told, that there were some there "that should not "taste death, till they saw the Son of man coming in his "kingdom," or the kingdom of God coming with power, Matth. xvi. 28. Mark ix. 1. They saw this, after the Lord ascended, and poured out the Holy Ghost; and then they began to preach of it after this manner: "Therefore, "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having recei-"ved of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath "shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David "is not ascended into the heavens, (*i. e.* with his body, as "Jesus did); but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my "Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy "footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assu-"redly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have "crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts ii. 33.—36. And thus this kingdom, spoken of long before by the prophets, and declared to be at hand by John Baptist, and by Jesus Christ himself while on earth, was fairly set up, and took place, when he sat down on his throne in heaven, and sent his gospel, with the Holy Ghost, from thence unto all nations, gathering the things on earth together with the things in heaven, into one in himself. John Baptist was more than a prophet, because he had this to declare, "The kingdom of "heaven is at hand;" but the least of them that preach the gospel of the kingdom, which the Apostle says "we have "now received," has greater things to declare than John the Baptist, and so is greater than he. This is our great privilege under the gospel, that this kingdom is set up, and is daily increasing. New-Testament believers have received this kingdom, and they are herein privileged far beyond the Old Testament saints, who did not receive this glorious accomplishment of the promises till it took place, and so were not made perfect without us. And however little we may reckon of this, through our blindness and inadvertency to it, yet the angels desire to look into this "glory following the suffer-"ings of Christ," 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12.

For my part, I could not understand the Lord and his Apostles speaking of this kingdom, and the glorious new state of

of things, far excelling what was before. For, thought I, the Old-Teſtament ſaints were ſaved the ſame way as we, and they went to heaven when they died, even as New-Teſtament ſaints; the covenant of grace was ſtill the ſame; and all the difference between the Old and New Teſtament is only in ſome circumſtances: how then do the apoſtles make ſuch a world's wonder of the excellency of this new ſtate of things, and of the great happineſs of living under it, and having a part in it? But when it pleaſed the Lord, by ſeveral means, to open the ſcriptures, and thereby lead me into ſome notion at leaſt of what I have been hitherto attempting to declare, I came to find, that (whatever was the happineſs of the Old-Teſtament ſaints in heaven before Chriſt came, and though there was never any eternal ſalvation for ſinners but of free grace through Jeſus Chriſt, and by faith in him), there is a greater difference betwixt the New Teſtament and the Old than I apprehended, and that our Lord and his apoſtles are far from ſpeaking hyperbolically, in declaring the exceeding glory of the New-Teſtament ſtate of things above all that took place in the world before; and that every ſcribe inſtructed in the kingdom of God, has glorious new things to bring out of his treaſure, as well as old. Yet, after all that has been hitherto ſaid, ſome, no doubt, may ſee but little ground for reckoning much upon the glorious things God hath done in the latter days; and may be looking on the things ſaid as airy notions, perhaps afraid of them, and thinking within themſelves, "Oh that our faith were like the "faith of the Old-Teſtament ſaints!" They do well to imitate their faith; for it is propoſed to us as a pattern to follow; "but ſtill looking to Jeſus, the author and finiſher "of our faith, who, for the joy that was ſet before him, en-"dured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at "the right hand of the throne of God." God has revealed nothing in vain; and what he ſeems to make much of, we muſt not deſpiſe. And if there be any difference betwixt things hid in God and manifeſted, betwixt a type and the thing typified, betwixt a promiſe and the accompliſhment of that promiſe, there muſt be ſuch a difference betwixt this new ſtate of things and what was before: and if the accompliſhment of a promiſe have things in it which were not while the promiſe was not accompliſhed, there muſt be new things, even a new kingdom here. Yet becauſe many can ſee no ſatisfying accompliſhment of the prophecies in the times of refreſhing, which commenced upon Chriſt's aſcenſion, and his coming

coming in the gospel, and are to issue in the times of restitution of all things, at his second coming; and because they cannot see the new things of the kingdom of God, which were not before Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth, and ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; it will not be amiss, therefore, to put them in mind of some things further to satisfy them in this point. As,

1. God is manifested in this New-Testament church and kingdom, as he was never before, John i. 18. Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. God is represented to the creatures no way to the disadvantage in the "Word made flesh," the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. All the discoveries were imperfect before the express image of his person was exhibited.

This same New-Testament church discovers something that was hid in God from the beginning of the world, not from men only, but from the angels, Eph. iii. 9. 10. It is no disparagement to the Old-Testament saints, or their happiness in heaven before Christ came, to say, that there was something hid from them which the angels themselves knew not: "For "unto the angels in heavenly places is now known, by the "church, the manifold wisdom of God." Now God's great counsels are laid open to them; they now see the end of the creating the worlds, and of the entrance of sin, and of their preservation from falling, and of the translating the Old-Testament saints into heaven among them; and of all the promises, types, and shadows of the Old Testament; and the mystery of his whole procedure from the foundation of the world unfolded, and new wonders of wisdom exposed to them, which they had no thought of before. All this is made known to them by the church, even this same church that we reckon so little upon. Blind thoughtless creatures are we, that are called to the knowledge of this church, and profess to believe it, and yet see no form or comeliness in it, beyond what was in the world before it was: and yet the angels desire to pry into it, and, as it were, go to school again, to learn something of God they knew not before. They had studied the works of creation and providence before; they had inquired into all the promises and types of the Old Testament, and considered whatever prefigurations or preparations for this state of things were in the heaven before; but, like children looking to a wise workman gathering materials, making preparations, and addressing himself to some notable piece of workmanship, they wondered what it should

come

come to at the length. Now here they see it in the church; yea, and they are obliged to the Son of man for new lessons in the church, which they never learned before. The Son of man, Christ Jesus, knows more of God than ever man or angel knew; even the soul of Jesus Christ is filled with wisdom very far above angels, and therefore he makes that gradation, Mark xiii. 32.—— "Of that hour knoweth no man, "no not the angels, — neither the Son." This knowledge of God that is in the church, is first communicate to the soul of the Son of man, and from him to angels and men; neither can they know any thing of God but what was known before, except this way. This then is the teacher of angels as well as of men; and this his church is his school. The angels are not ashamed to own themselves his scholars here, Rev. xix. 10. and compare Rev. i. 1. with xxii. 9.

That of God which is made known in this kingdom, as it was never before, is especially his grace; therefore the Apostle, when speaking of this kingdom that we have received, says, "Let us hold the grace." To clear this, let us consider, 1. The state of things before the entrance of sin. 2. From thence to the setting up of this kingdom.

As to the first of these: 1. Whatever discoveries of God's goodness were in that state, yet there was no such condescension of God towards the creatures, as in the person and mediation of Emmanuel, God with us. 2. Neither was there any full representation of his love in a fruit like itself. He gave many things, but not his Son, in that first state; but now "God so loved the world, he gave his Son;" a fruit of his love equal to itself! 3. There was no discovery of pardoning mercy in that state of things; not the least evidence of it. But here it reigns, through the righteousness of Christ, unto eternal life, and all the glory of God shines here. 4. There was no preserving grace belonging unto that state of things; and therefore both angels and men fell. As to the preservation of the angels that stood, that was not owing unto the state wherein they were made, but unto their election of sovereign grace unto this kingdom; and that grace is the grace of this kingdom.

Next, If we consider the state of things after the fall, before Christ came, under the Old Testament, we shall see that this kingdom excels in this respect, of a discovery of God's grace. For, 1. Then this grace was only foreshewed in dark promises and types, not yet fully exhibited. True, the saints were saved in believing it; but they believed it to

come afterward: "They died in faith, not having received "the promiſes; but ſaw them afar off, and were perſuaded "of them, and embraced them." All the grace they enjoyed was the fruit of their election unto this kingdom, and was their preparation for it: ſo it was the grace of this kingdom, like a few drops of rain before a full ſhower. This grace, foreſhewed and foretaſted by Old-Teſtament ſaints, was much vailed, not only in the types, but in the promiſes and prophecies of it: ſo that the "prophets themſelves in-"quired what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt, "which was in them, did ſignify, when it told beforehand "the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow." Conſider 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12. The light that ſhines in the New Teſtament has given unto New-Teſtament believers more underſtanding of the promiſes and prophecies than the prophets themſelves had. Moſes's law, with all the prefigurations it had of this grace, was a vail over it; ſo that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed: "But we all, with open face, behold, as "in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord." And theſe dark aforehand diſcoveries of the grace of God were incloſed in narrow bounds; firſt, in the families of the patriarchs, then in the nation of Iſrael: but now "the grace of God that bringeth "ſalvation, hath appeared unto all men," all nations. See Eph. ii. from ℣ 12. Then it was whiſpered in a corner, now it is proclaimed to every creature, Rom. xvi. 25. 26. 2. If we conſider the Old Teſtament, and the ſtate of things under it, in themſelves, and abſtract from the promiſes of this grace, and the typical reference they had unto this grace; there we have the miniſtration of death, but here the miniſtration of righteouſneſs and of the Spirit. There was bondage and fear; here is liberty, and love, and lively hope. There they were held at a diſtance; here there is acceſs into the holieſt by the ſpirit of adoption, and boldneſs and confidence by the faith of Chriſt. In a word, the law given by Moſes miniſtered and wrought wrath, but grace came by Jeſus Chriſt: The law had the promiſes and ſhadows of grace, but the truth of theſe came by Jeſus Chriſt, John i. 17. "Now "hath God ſaved us, and called us with a holy calling, ac-"cording to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given us "in Chriſt before the world began, but is now made mani-"feſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who "hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to "light through the goſpel." 2 Tim. i. 9. 10.

2. There

2. There was never such union and communion between God and the creatures in the world before, as in this kingdom. Now God's nature and ours is wonderfully met in the person of the Son of God, the King of this kingdom. This was not till Christ came; neither was the Holy Ghost dwelling in the Son of man, as the head, and in all his people, as the members of his mystical body. For however the Old-Testament saints were prepared for this, by the Spirit of Christ in them beforehand, yet they could not be thus united to the "Word made flesh," the "First-born from the dead", the "Head of the body, the church," Eph. i. 19.—23. Col. i. 18. 19. Our Lord proposes this wonderful new thing to his disciples for their encouragement, when about to leave them, John xiv. 17.—20. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, he saith, "He dwelleth in you;" and further promises, "He shall be "in you, and I will come unto you. The world seeth me no "more, but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also. At "that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in "me, and I in you."

3. God was never so worshipped in the world before, as he is in this kingdom. While the creatures were perfect, they glorified God to their power; but all the creatures put together, could not, by any performance of worship, fully glorify him. They came infinitely short of this: and as there were some of his attributes not known to them, particularly pardoning mercy; so he had not the glory of it from them: neither was his vindictive justice glorified in that state of things to purpose. But God would have the glory of these attributes, and he will be perfectly worshipped and glorified. This could not be by mere creatures, nor could it be but by a sin-offering; therefore sin must enter into the world, or God cannot be thus worshipped and glorified in the world. From the entrance of sin, God was not worshipped among men, but by sacrifices and offerings for sin: but, alas! the sacrifices of beasts, men, or angels, could never fully glorify God's justice, mercy, and all his other attributes; he would never have appointed such sacrifices, but with a view to a better that should follow. "In burnt-offerings and sacrifices "for sin he had no pleasure. But then, in the fulness of "time, the Son of God came, the high priest and sacrifice "of God's providing." He hath glorified God by presenting unto him an offering for sin, whereby the justice and mercy of God, and all his other attributes, are glorified to the full. Was there ever a worshipper like this in the world before, or

ſuch a high prieſt as Jeſus the Son of God? "Now every "high prieſt is ordained to offer gifts and ſacrifices: where- "fore it is of neceſſity that this man have ſomewhat alſo to "offer," Heb. viii. 3.; and that is the ſacrifice of himſelf, his own blood, wherewith he hath entered into the true holy place, heaven itſelf, there to preſent it continually before the Father, as the miniſter of the ſanctuary and the true tabernacle. This ſacrifice, once offered, and the blood of it brought into the holy place, and preſented before the throne, glorifies God infinitely and fully; becauſe it is the ſacrifice of the Son himſelf, his own blood, the blood of God. "Burnt-offering and ſacrifices thou wouldſt not; then ſaid I, "Lo, I come." There is ſomething worth the noticing in that *I*, repeated with a *Behold*. The ſtreſs of the whole leans there; God, that found himſelf not ſuitably worſhipped, not fully glorified, in all the ſin-offerings, for want of worth in them, is pleaſed in this *I*: "This is my beloved Son, "in him I am well pleaſed." See Jer. xxx. 21. This *I* is the Father's equal, partaker with him in the ſame Godhead, "the man his fellow," that was in the form of God, and took on him the form of a ſervant, for this purpoſe. Here is a divine worſhipper then, and divine worſhip performed, and given to the Father by Jeſus Chriſt, preſenting before him this his offering, and God is fully glorified by the blood of God.

This is the worſhip given unto God in the name of the whole church, Heb. ii. 12. and God is infinitely pleaſed in it. All the church in heaven and earth behold it, and cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain;" for what is our worſhip, but an acknowledgment of, and concurrence with this moſt perfect worſhip given to the Father by Jeſus Chriſt? God takes no pleaſure in any worſhip where this God-glorifying offering is not acknowledged. The high prieſts on earth went into the holieſt with their offering, bearing on their breaſt and ſhoulders, or arms, the names of the tribes ingraven with the ingravings of a ſignet: But, Oh, to be ſet as a ſeal in the heart, as a ſeal on the arm of this high prieſt, appearing in the preſence of God for his people, and worſhipping in their name. This was a good thing to come of old; now it is come; let us improve it. "Let us come "boldly to a throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find "grace to help us in the time of need. Bring no more vain "oblations." Acknowledge the oblation made. "Offer "unto God thankſgiving" for what is done. And we muſt alſo

alſo know, that this is a moſt awful thing: Here the divine glory and majeſty ſhines in its ſtrength. When we ſerve him acceptably, holding this grace, it muſt be with reverence and godly fear: "O worſhip the Lord in the beauty of ho-"lineſs: Fear before him all the earth."

4. There was never ſuch a ſociety before in the world as is this kingdom. Of this incomparable ſociety we have ſome account, Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24.; and we have ſomething of it, Col. i. 20. But, in the epiſtle to the Epheſians, which ſeems deſigned to give an account of the excellency of the New-Teſtament church, we have this thing much extolled by the Apoſtle. He uſes ſeveral ſimilitudes to ſet it forth; he calls it a *city*, wherein we are fellow-citizens, chap. ii. 19. And to this agrees what is ſaid, Heb. xii. 22. "Ye are "come to the city of the living God." And Phil. iii. 20. "Our converſation," or citizenſhip, "is in heaven." He calls it a *houſehold*, a *family*; the whole family in heaven and in earth, chap. ii. 19. and iii. 15. He calls it a *body*, chap. iii. 6. and iv. particularly ℣ 16. and i. 23. He calls it a *building*, a *temple*, chap. ii. 20. 21. "And are built upon "the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt "himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, in whom all the "building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy tem-"ple in the Lord." And chap. iii. 16.—19. He prays for believers, that they may be "ſtrengthened with all might by "the Spirit in the inner man;" that "Chriſt may dwell in "their hearts by faith," and that "they may be rooted "and grounded in love;" for this purpoſe, that ſo they may be able to have a true proſpect of, and take up rightly the dimenſions of this glorious ſpiritual building: "That he "may be able to comprehend with all ſaints, what is the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height." And he tells us what advantage they ſhould have thereby: "So they "ſhall know the love of Chriſt that paſſes knowledge, and "be filled with all the fulneſs of God." So great a matter did the Apoſtle, yea the Spirit of Chriſt in him, make the underſtanding of this glorious thing. And, chap. i. 8. 9. 10. he magnifies the grace of God much in making known the myſtery of it to them: "He hath abounded toward us in "all wiſdom and prudence: having made known unto us the "myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which "he hath purpoſed in himſelf." And what myſtery of his will can this be? Even this, "That, in the diſpenſation of the "fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one" (or gather

ther again in one head) " all things in Chriſt, both which are " in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." There is a wonderful aſſociation, or rather union, of different things here, that were ſeparated, but never united after this manner before. God and the creature, angels and the ſpirits of juſt men in heaven; again, heaven and earth; and on earth, Jews and Gentiles, and they of all nations, all ranks, conditions, and ſexes, are all joined in one in Chriſt Jeſus, the Son of man, who is the Son of God. This is a moſt glorious ſociety for number; and when it appears at the laſt day, all the promiſes and types of it, in this reſpect, will be found fully verified in it. They are gathered in one in Chriſt, even in him. This muſt be peculiarly noticed, becauſe ſo repeated. There was never ſuch a bond of union, ſuch an uniting head, in any ſociety in the world before, as this is. In him all the members ſtand in the neareſt manner united to one another, and to God, John xvii. 21. 23. 1 Cor. xii. 12. 13. And this wonderful union is moſt firm and everlaſting. It is impoſſible that it ſhould be by any means diſſolved: " On " this rock will I build my church." There had been an union and peace among the creatures before, but it was diſſolved by the entrance of ſin. God has now ſettled this ſociety and its union upon an everlaſting foundation. The things in heaven and earth are united together here in the moſt holy manner; the bond of union is divine. In him alſo they ſit together in heavenly places, Eph. ii. 6. There was never ſuch a ſociety as this in the world before. " Jeſus aſcended " far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." This was reſerved " unto the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times," as the Apoſtle ſays. And in this all God's great counſels and deſigns concerning all his works whatſoever do terminate. The head of this body the church, is head over all things unto it, even as all things were before made by him, and for him, Eph. i. 22. 23. Col. i. 16.—20.

5. There was never ſuch an inheritance in the world before, as that which the Father gave to Jeſus Chriſt his Son, when he ſet him at his own right hand in heavenly places; and in this inheritance his people in heaven and earth are joint heirs with him, who purchaſed it by his own blood, Rom. viii. 17. Gal. iv. 7 Eph. i. 11.—18. The eyes of our underſtandings muſt be enlightened by the Spirit, if we would know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints. The glory beſtowed on the Son of man, the head of the church, and the fulneſs given to him

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in poſſeſſion, when he aſcended to the Father's right hand, is ſuch as was never given to any before: and this is the inheritance of the New-Teſtament church, of which believers have the earneſt and firſt-fruits here, while they ſee him "by faith "whom the world cannot ſee," John xvi. 14. 15. Yet they "live by faith, not by ſight." But "when Chriſt, with "whom their life is now hid, ſhall appear, then ſhall they "appear with him in glory."

There can be no queſtion but it was an addition to the happineſs and glory of thoſe in heaven, when they began to partake with the Son of man, Chriſt Jeſus, in that fulneſs beſtowed on him, however great their happineſs was there before, while they were there, as Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, dwelling in Canaan, the land of promiſe, but not yet poſſeſſing the inheritance. Thus the inheritance of this kingdom is a new thing excelling all that was before.

6. That holy Spirit of promiſe wherewith believers are ſealed in Chriſt, which is the earneſt of their inheritance, even the Spirit of adoption, the Comforter, ſeems to be another new thing in this kingdom, and peculiar to New-Teſtament believers; as theſe ſcriptures ſeem plainly to declare: John vii. 38. 39. "He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture "hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water. "But this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on "him ſhould receive: for the Holy Ghoſt was not yet gi-"ven, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified." John xvi. 7. "Nevertheleſs, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you "that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will "not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto "you." Acts i. 4. 5. "And being aſſembled together with "them, commanded them, that they ſhould not depart "from Jeruſalem, but wait for the promiſe of the Father, "which, ſaith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly "baptized with water; but ye ſhall be baptized with the "Holy Ghoſt not many days hence." Acts ii. 33 "There-"fore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having "received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he "hath ſhed forth this, which ye now ſee and hear." Acts xv. 8. 9. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them "witneſs, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, even as he did unto "us; and put no difference betwixt us and them, purifying "their hearts by faith." Acts xix. 2. 3. "He ſaid unto "them, Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed? "And they ſaid unto him, We have not ſo much as heard

"whether

" whether there be any Holy Ghoſt. And he ſaid unto them, " Unto what then were ye baptized? And they ſaid, Unto " John's Baptiſm." Rom. viii. 15. 16. 17. 23. " For ye " have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but " ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, " Abba, Father. The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our " ſpirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, " then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt: if " ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glori- " fied together.——Ourſelves alſo, which have the firſt-fruits " of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, " waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our " body." 2 Cor. i. 21. 22. " Now he which ſtabliſheth us " with you in Chriſt, and hath anointed us, is God; who " hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in " our hearts." Gal. iii. 13. 14. " Chriſt hath redeemed us " from the curſe of the law,—that the bleſſing of Abraham " might come on the Gentiles, through Jeſus Chriſt; that we " might receive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith." Gal. iv. 3.—6. " Even ſo, when we were children, we were in bond- " age under the elements of the world; but when the fulneſs " of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a " woman, made under the law, that we might receive the " adoption of ſons. And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath " ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, " Abba, Father." Eph. i. 13. 14. " In whom ye alſo truſt- " ed, after that ye heard the word of truth, the goſpel of " your ſalvation: in whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye " were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the " earneſt of our inheritance, until the redemption of the pur- " chaſed poſſeſſion, unto the praiſe of his glory."

Theſe are ſome inſtances of the excellent new things of this glorious kingdom; which being duly conſidered, with what has been before ſaid, may ſatisfy us, that it was not unworthy of God to ſpeak ſo much of it by the prophets, and to repreſent it beforehand in ſo many figures. And if neither the preſent ſtate of this kingdom, nor the glorious perfection and manifeſtation of it " in the times of reſtitution " of all things," which are to take place at our Lord's ſe- cond coming, will ſatisfy us, as to the accompliſhment of the prophecies concerning the glory of this kingdom, I know not what will ſatisfy us, if it be not that temporal kingdom, which the Jews have been looking for in their unbelief and hardneſs of heart, and in their oppoſition to the kingdom of

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our Lord Jesus; but it ought to be most firmly believed among Christians, that they shall be ashamed of these their expectations. They despised the kingdom of God which they had of old; and now, when that is done away, and the kingdom of heaven is come, they affect that old kingdom much, and exceedingly despise this; and while they are so affected, it is evident they cannot receive this kingdom of God, which is not of this world. But when the vail which is upon their hearts in the reading of the Old Testament is taken away, they will see the glory of this kingdom, and its excellency above that which is removed: so will they forget the earthly things, and seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; and, if they shall rise with Christ from that death under which they lie, they will be dead to this world, and have their life hid with Christ in God, not to appear, till he appear, and they with him in glory, Col. iii 1.—4.

And thus far we have been considering the import of our Lord's expression, "Now is my kingdom not from hence; "my kingdom is not of this world." We shall next see how he manifests to Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world.

CHAP. III.

Of the distinction betwixt the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of Christ.

WE have heard how our Lord confessed himself to be the King promised to the Jews, and owned his kingdom before Pilate; and we have also heard his testimony concerning the nature of his kingdom, as not now of this world, and so quite distinct from that which his accusers were looking for. By this his testimony it is evident, that the charge brought against him, of being against Cæsar, by making himself a king, was altogether without foundation. But further, he demonstrates to Pilate, that his kingdom in the world is not a worldly kingdom, and so does not interfere with Cæsar's kingdom, when he says, "If my kingdom were "of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should "not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not "from hence."

It was a fact that might be plain to the observation of

Pilate and the Jews, that he did not allow his ſervants to fight to defend him from the Jews.

It is true, he had ſignified to his diſciples, that they would be in ſuch circumſtances as wherein they would ſtand in extreme need of this ſort of defence; and had ſaid to them, "He that hath no ſword, let him ſell his garment, and buy "one," Luke xxii. 36. Yet, while they ſtood in the greateſt need of ſelling their garments to buy ſwords, before the Emperor turned Chriſtian, they did not reckon that theſe words of the Lord were intended to oblige them to take the ſword for their defence in their profeſſion: For when the diſciples anſwered Chriſt, ſaying, "Here are two ſwords," he ſaid unto them, "It is enough;" ſurely not for eleven diſciples; but it was enough for his purpoſe, which was to give occaſion, *firſt*, for the "miracle of healing Malchus's "ear," wherein he gave a notable evidence of his good-will to his enemies, and that he was able to deliver himſelf, but condeſcended to ſuffer; and a notable pattern to his people, of doing acts of kindneſs to enemies, and of patience in ſuffering; and, *ſecondly*, for the following prohibition of drawing the ſword in his quarrel; for, when he healed the ear, he ſaid to his enemies, "Suffer ye thus far," Luke xxii. 51.; and to Peter, Matth. xxvi. 52. "Put up again thy ſword into his place; "for all they that take the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword." He ſpeaks there of another ſort of defence, more agreeable to the nature of his heavenly kingdom, than the ſword of his diſciples, which he would have uſed rather, if it had not been unſuitable to his preſent condition, and againſt the fulfilment of the ſcripture, ℣ 53. 54. "Thinkeſt thou that I cannot "now pray to my Father, and he ſhall preſently give me "more than twelve legions of angels? But how then ſhall "the ſcriptures be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be?" There is no need of the ſword of the diſciples to defend the kingdom of heaven; the armies of angels are more ſuitable to this kingdom than armies of fighting men.

After this diſcharge of the ſword, we have no commandment to Chriſt's diſciples to take the ſword to fight for his kingdom, nor any encouragement to expect his concurrence, or look for ſucceſs in that way; but rather the contrary. For as he ſays to Peter, "All that take the ſword, ſhall periſh by "the ſword;" ſo this is upon the matter repeated, Rev. xiii. 10. "He that leadeth into captivity, ſhall go into captivity; "he that killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword. "Here is the patience and the faith of the ſaints." Where,

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it seems, the good fight of faith and patience is opposed to the fight which is by the sword. This threatening, with respect to the disciples and saints of Jesus their taking the sword, for the defence of his kingdom, has been verified in many instances. We need not go farther than this same land. The disciples of Christ here took the sword, and openly professed it was for the defence of Christ's kingdom; but they went into captivity, and were killed, first by the sword of Montrose, (whereby the land also suffered for the perjury immediately going before), next by the sword of Cromwell, and then by the sword of Charles II. and the Bishops; neither was it by their own sword that they were at length delivered. The Lord owned as many of his truths and ways as they contended for, and them in adhering to them unto death; but not their mistakes, nor their way of fighting with the sword. The earth hath helped the woman in many instances against Antichrist since the reformation, swallowing up the flood of persecution, cast out of the mouth of the dragon; but the earth and the woman are two very distinct things.

However, it was a plain fact, that our Lord did not allow his servants to fight to defend him from the Jews; and hereby he manifests, "that his kingdom is not of this world." To this purpose he gives an account of a kingdom of this world, and describes it by that without which it cannot be; and that is self-defence by worldly power.

As the kingdoms of the world took their first rise from the necessity of associations for this defence, so it is impossible, in the nature of the thing, that they can be, or stand without it. Though a kingdom might be supposed without breaking in upon other kingdoms, yet no kingdom can be without power to defend itself from outward attacks by the sword, and from evils arising within itself: so that our Lord's account of a kingdom of this world is most just, as it is also the fittest that could be for his present purpose.

And here he establishes the natural principle of self-defence in the kingdoms of this world. His subjects on this earth are members of those societies that have power to defend themselves by the sword, and he has allowed them to do their duty in their stations and callings in them, and his grace will make them more faithful and conscientious in the duties of their stations and callings in those kingdoms.

As violence offered to the consciences of men is one of the greatest injuries, so, in all associations for defence by the sword, this ought to be attended to, and all men have a

right of defence in the kingdoms of this world from violence offered to their conſciences in matters of religion. This right is by no means refuſed to thoſe kingdoms by the Lord Chriſt. Antichriſt is the great invader of the liberty of mankind in this matter. He is furniſhed with worldly power, and he uſes it unto this purpoſe. Where he prevails, tyranny, as in other reſpects, ſo eſpecially in this, hath taken place, and men are inſlaved this way; but, in Proteſtant kingdoms and commonwealths, there is ſome more freedom, and the ſubjects of Chriſt enjoy that liberty in common with others in thoſe kingdoms where this natural right of mankind is in any meaſure defended. Thus far has the earth helped the woman: and this is properly the Proteſtant cauſe, ſo far as the ſword and the power of the kingdoms of this world is concerned in it. And upon this ground ſtands the revolution fully warranted, as it concerns religion.

And this is the common cauſe of mankind, according to the firſt riſe and reaſon of the kingdoms of this world.

Now, from the account our Lord gives of a worldly kingdom, he demonſtrates that his kingdom is not of this world, and therefore does not interfere with Cæſar's; for ſince he did not allow his ſervants to fight for his defence, and ſo had ſet aſide that without which no kingdom of this world can be, it is evident his kingdom cannot be of this world. And he plainly intimates, that his kingdom is of ſuch a nature, that it does not admit of that kind of defence: "My ſervants "would fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews: "but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Some think this is to be confined to his preſent circumſtances, when he was only laying the foundation of his kingdom, in his ſufferings; and that becauſe he came into the world to ſuffer for his people, who could not be redeemed without his ſufferings; and to fulfil the prophecies concerning his ſufferings, it behoved him to ſuffer. But they reckon the caſe is not ſo now with his ſubjects, ſince his kingdom is ſet up in the world. They may now aſſociate themſelves to defend his truths and inſtitutions, and to defend one another in their profeſſion of them, by all the power of this world that they have or can attain unto. And ſo ſhould I think if it were not for the following reaſons.

1. Our Lord does not here give his preſent circumſtances as the reaſon of his not allowing his ſervants to fight for defending him, but the nature of his kingdom; or, if he draws an inference from this matter of fact, to ſhew the nature of his

his kingdom, this his inference is made void by this account of the thing. If our Lord had given the leaſt intimation of this to Pilate, or if Pilate had taken the leaſt ſuſpicion of this from his words, he would have been apprehenſive of his kingdom, and found fault in him; which yet he did not. It is true, he ſays, "Now is my kingdom not from hence." But this *now*, as has been ſaid, refers to the ſtate of God's kingdom before this in Iſrael, and is plainly oppoſed to it, importing the great change now a-making in that point. And when our Lord is making an account of his kingdom to Pilate, is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he ſpeaks of it only in that time, when he was but laying the foundations of it, and when it was not yet ſet up?

2. He calls his followers to imitate him in this very thing, "patient ſuffering." When he foretells his ſufferings and death, Matth. xvi. 21. Peter, who had made that excellent confeſſion concerning his perſon, yet affecting a temporal kingdom, and filled with that ſort of zeal, rebukes his maſter, ſaying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this ſhall not be unto "thee," ℣ 22. We do not read of a more ſharp rebuke given to his diſciples on any occaſion, than that which he gave to Peter at this time, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art "an offence unto me: for thou ſavoureſt not the things that "be of God, but thoſe that be of men." He minded earthly things, and ſo ſet himſelf againſt the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, for the redemption and ſalvation of the church. But though his ſufferings were thus abſolutely neceſſary, and Peter far in the wrong to ſtand againſt them; yet this may be ſuppoſed to be far from his ſervants and followers; ſeeing the caſe is not the ſame with them as with him, whom it behoved to ſuffer for the redemption of the church. Our Lord deſtroys ſuch a ſuppoſition, by telling his diſciples, and all his followers, that they muſt be conformed to him their maſter and leader, in this point of ſuffering, and ſo deprives them of all hopes of a temporal kingdom, and lays a perpetual bar in the way of their minding earthly things. His followers, though they be not to ſuffer for the redemption of the world, yet they muſt be conformed to their leader, they muſt follow their crucified maſter, bearing their croſs after him, ℣ 24. 25. "Then ſaid "Jeſus unto his diſciples, If any man will come after me, "let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me. "For whoſoever will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it; and whoſo-"ever will loſe his life for my ſake, ſhall find it." Luke has it,

it, "Let him take up his croſs daily," chap. ix. 23. To the ſame purpoſe, ſays our Lord, when ſpeaking of his ſufferings for the ſalvation of his people, and for gathering them unto him, John xii. 23.—26. "He that loveth his life, ſhall loſe it; and "he that hateth his life in this world, ſhall keep it unto life "eternal. If any man ſerve me, let him follow me," *&c.* The true profeſſion of Chriſt's truths, and all his commands and inſtitutions, will always, one way or other, croſs our worldly intereſt: "For all that will live godly in him, muſt "ſuffer." And it is a vain thing to think to hold him and our worldly intereſt together: "No man can ſerve two ma-"ſters," 2 Tim. iii. 12. Rev xii. 17.

This ſame Peter, that could not endure to hear of his maſter's ſufferings, tells us expreſsly, that Chriſt hath left all his people an example of patient ſuffering, and ſets before us that ſame very thing that ſome would make peculiar to our Lord, as a pattern to copy after, 1 Pet. ii. 19.—23. "For "this is thank-worthy, if a man for conſcience toward God "endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, "if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye ſhall take it "patiently? But if when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye "take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even "hereunto were ye called; becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for "us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps: "Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuf-"fered, he threatened not, but committed himſelf to him "that judgeth righteouſly." Thus he ſets forth Chriſt as a pattern, not only to ſlaves, as ſome conceive, but unto all his followers. And chap. iv. ℣ 1. he thus exhorts Chriſtians, "Foraſmuch then as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, "arm yourſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind." Here is armour for Chriſt's followers, inſtead of the ſword, which Peter himelf once took when he was in no good condition for ſuffering: but now he ſays, "Arm yourſelves with the ſame "mind that Chriſt had, when he ſuffered for us in the fleſh."

Our Lord tells his diſciples, Matth. x. 16. "Behold, I ſend "you forth as ſheep in the midſt of wolves: be ye therefore "wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves." I have found this wiſdom of the ſerpent much inſiſted on, and our Lord's call to it much perverted, to patroniſe his followers in uſing that wiſdom of this world, as to which a man muſt become a fool, that he may be wiſe. But the harmleſsneſs of the dove, the Chriſtian meekneſs, and patience in ſuffering for the name

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of Christ, is less spoke of. He would have his followers to outshine the men of this world, in bearing injuries, especially in his cause; and calls them rather to prepare for more sufferings, when they are injured, than to resent injuries done them, under pretence of avoiding greater wrongs that may follow if they should bear patiently, Matth. v. 38.—48. He does not allow his subjects to disturb the kingdoms of this world, by taking the sword to advance or defend his interest and kingdom in the world, but calls them to be subject to the powers that be, to "pay tribute" to them, "to pray for "them, and to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness "and honesty," Matth. xxii. 21. and xvii. 24.—27. Rom. xiii. 1.—8. 1 Tim. ii. 1.—4. Tit. iii. 1. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 13.—17. And it has been observed, that the Christians, while they were sufferers, had no hand in the insurrections that were in the Empire.

3. However much the disciples affected a temporal kingdom before the Lord ascended, Acts i. 6.; yet, after his ascension, and the Holy Ghost's coming, they studied conformity to him in this matter, and never attempted to take the sword, either for promoting or defending his interest and kingdom in the world. And here we may observe a difference betwixt the Old-Testament kingdom and the New. Of old, the Spirit of God came upon his subjects, in that earthly state of the church, to enable them to fight with the sword against the enemies of that kingdom, to destroy them, and to defend the kingdom of God; and by a very few the Lord wrought great deliverances then, and destroyed vast numbers of men: "Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, *&c.* through "faith subdued kingdoms, waxed valiant in fight, turned to "flight the armies of the aliens." But the apostles of Christ, though they had five thousand men in Jerusalem, Acts iv. 4. a greater number of men than those by whom the Lord wrought great temporal deliverances of old, yet they never attempted to stir in that way, but submitted patiently to suffer. And even when the captains and officers feared the people, lest they should have been stoned, and so were obliged to bring them without violence, they came peaceably. The church of Jerusalem was then full of the Spirit of Christ, the people magnified them, and the power of the Spirit of God was remarkable in the great miracles done upon the bodies of men to heal their diseases. If the Spirit had been given, as of old, to enable them to fight, or if it had been the will of Christ, that his kingdom should be advanced or defended

fended in that way, they had men enow to defend themselves againſt the Jews and the Romans; for the Lord ſaves "by few as well as many." And what was the hand of the Jews and Romans againſt the hand of the Lord, and his ſword in the hand of his people, as in the hand of Gideon of old? But Chriſt would not have his ſervants to fight for him, becauſe his kingdom was not now of this world. I queſtion not but the difference obſerved by Gamaliel, betwixt thoſe two men that aroſe with the ſword, who were deſtroyed, and whoſe followers were diſperſed, and the apoſtles of Chriſt, who had nothing of worldly power about them, and made no ſtir that way, was the thing that made him ſuſpect, that "this work was of God," and "could not be overthrown," Acts v. 26. 27. and 34.—39.

The Apoſtle inſinuates a difference in this point betwixt the New-Teſtament believers and the Old-Teſtament worthies, whom he brings in as witneſſes to the way of faith in Chriſt, and whom he would have us to imitate in their faith and patience, Heb. xi. and xii. from the beginning. For he ſays, "Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, "looking unto Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith; who, "for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, de-"ſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the "throne of God. For conſider him that endured ſuch con-"tradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be weary, and "faint in your minds. Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, "ſtriving againſt ſin." This is another race ſet before us, than that of "ſubduing kingdoms, waxing valiant in fight, and "putting to flight the armies of the aliens." This is the Chriſtian's fight, even the ſpiritual warfare againſt ſin in ourſelves, and in the world about us. This is the Chriſtian reſiſtance; even holding faſt the profeſſion of our faith unto the death, againſt all contradiction and terror that ſerves to move us to let it go. This is the Chriſtian hero, that is conformed to the Captain of ſalvation in bearing the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and enduring the contradiction of ſinners. And to this agrees that exhortation, Heb. xiii. 12. 13. 14. "Jeſus —— that he might ſanctify the people with his own "blood, ſuffered without the gate. Let us go forth there-"fore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. "For here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek one to "come."

We have the Chriſtian warfare, ſuitable to the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, and altogether diſtinct from a worldly warfare,

fare, ſet forth, Eph. vi. from ℣ 10. to 20. Notice ℣ 12. and ſee the warfare of the firſt Chriſtians oppoſed unto a worldly warfare: "For we wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but a-"gainſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of "the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in "high places." And the armour unto this warfare is the armour of God, which the Apoſtle deſcribes. Here we have no other ſword but the ſword of the Spirit. The firſt Chriſtians uſed no other ſword but this, and withſtood their enemies, the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, with no other armour but this armour of God. In thoſe days, it was, in their eyes, the greateſt honour to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Chriſt, Acts v. 41. They did not then diſſemble or hide any part of the truth, for fear of ſuffering. They were not then filled with many contrivances of worldly wiſdom, to avoid perſecution, and to make to themſelves a great name in the earth. Then they ſaw a beauty in being conformed to Chriſt in his ſufferings, and they breathed vehemently after it, Phil. iii. 10. The Apoſtle calls as many as were duly inſtructed in the Chriſtian faith to be thus minded, in oppoſition to the Judaiſing teachers, who minded earthly things, ℣ 15. 17. 19. 20. Obedience to our Lord's command, Matth. v. 39. 40. 41. 44. and conformity to him in that point, was no ſtrange nor ridiculous thing then among Chriſtians, as it is now: 2 Cor. ii. 20. "For ye ſuffer if a man bring you "into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of "you, if a man exalt himſelf, if a man ſmite you on the "face."

4. A ſociety avouching Chriſt to be head and king of it, furniſhed with worldly power for defending his truths and inſtitutions, and aſſociated for defending his intereſt, and their profeſſion of ſubjection to him, by the ſword, is undoubtedly a kingdom of this world, by our Lord's deſcription of a kingdom of this world: for it agrees with our Lord's account of ſuch a kingdom, in that whereby it is diſtinguiſhed from his kingdom. Let it be what it will then, his kingdom it is not. And ſuch an aſſociation is plainly croſs to this teſtimony of our Lord concerning his kingdom.

But againſt all this it is ſaid, Is it not lawful to defend our natural and civil rights? And why not our religious rights too, ſince they are the moſt valuable? Or, though the firſt Chriſtians uſed not the ſword, when Chriſtianity was not a civil right, yet when it became ſo, by magiſtrates and whole nations their profeſſing Chriſtianity, may it not be defended even

as a civil right? *Anſ.* 1. How far religion is a natural and civil right, to be defended by the ſword in the kingdoms of this world, has been already declared. But that ſort of defence is the common right of mankind, and not peculiar to Chriſt's ſubjects. 2. It cannot be denied, that a defence of civil and natural rights in the kingdoms of this world is lawful and neceſſary; and they that have power, will defend their lives and fortunes by the ſword. But the truths and inſtitutions of Chriſt, and the privileges of his kingdom, which are not natural, nor civil and earthly, but ſpiritual, are not capable of ſuch a defence: they muſt be defended another way. 3. If there ſhould be a ſociety for defending the truths and inſtitutions of Chriſt, in the profeſſion of them, by the ſword; then theſe truths and inſtitutions would be thus laid in the conſtitution of that ſociety, which, by our Lord's deſcription of a worldly kingdom, is a kingdom of this world. But it is expreſsly contrary to this his confeſſion, that his truths and inſtitutions ſhould be in the conſtitution of a kingdom of this world. For thus that worldly ſociety or kingdom would be his kingdom, or his church: but he ſays, "My kingdom "is not of this world." 4. In ſuch an aſſociation of Chriſt's ſubjects, perſecution will be unavoidable. For ſhould any in that ſociety give up with the profeſſion of any of thoſe truths and inſtitutions which the ſociety judges to be Chriſt's, he muſt, according to the nature of ſociety, be deprived of the defence of that ſociety which hath thoſe truths in its conſtitution, and forfeits his right to all the worldly privileges of that ſociety, which, by the conſtitution of it, belong unto the profeſſion of thoſe truths, and the obſervation of thoſe inſtitutions. Further, if any in that ſociety, while it ſtands, ſhould find himſelf obliged, in his conſcience, to profeſs contrary to any of thoſe things that are held for truths of Chriſt by the ſociety, and are in the conſtitution of it, then the power of the ſociety muſt be put forth againſt him for the defence of the ſociety. So ſuch an aſſociation will be found inconſiſtent with that natural right of mankind, to be defended in the kingdoms of this world, from violence offered to their conſciences, which yet our Lord hath not taken away from thoſe kingdoms, by ſending his goſpel unto them. And this, if it were maintained, would anſwer all the good ends that could be propoſed by ſuch an aſſociation. For to deſtroy mens lives that will not receive Chriſt, or profeſs him, is not an end of a worldly ſociety that Chriſt will approve of.

When God's kingdom was worldly of old, the caſe was otherwiſe:

therwiſe: for then the profeſſion of any other religion than the religion of the nation of Iſrael, was rebellion againſt the king of that nation: "But now," ſays Chriſt, "My kingdom "is not of this world, not from hence."

If the natural right of mankind, with reſpect to religion, had been maintained in the kingdoms of this world, there had never been ſuch a thing as the kingdom of Antichriſt; and Chriſt's ſubjects cannot be great ſufferers where this right is preſerved; and if it be preſerved, others will enjoy the benefit of it as well as they. But if it be not, they are the perſons that will ſuffer moſt. Others can diſſemble their principles, and feign ſubjection to tyrannical power; but they are bound by the law of Chriſt openly to confeſs all his truths, the leaſt of them not excepted, ſo far as they know them; and that as they would not be denied by him at his coming.

It does not appear in his word, nor as yet in his providence, that ever he deſigned that his ſervants in this world ſhould be, by themſelves, in a capacity to defend their profeſſion againſt the powers of this earth, by the ſword. And they muſt "be ſtrangers on earth," conformed to the image of their ſuffering maſter, in bearing the croſs; and not conformed to this world, whatever ſhape it put on, whatever form it be caſt into; but transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, Rom. xii. 1. 2. "They are "crucified to the world, and the world to them; they are "dead to it, and their life is hid with Chriſt in God, not to "appear till he appear," Gal. vi. 12. 14. Col. iii. 3. 4. Then it is that the ſaints ſhall reign on the earth and till then they will be companions in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt.

If any of Chriſt's ſubjects ſhall, at any time, be in places of power, he has given them no warrant nor command to employ their power for deſtroying mens lives on his account; far leſs has he afforded any encouragement to his followers to raiſe up themſelves in the world, unto the diſturbance of the kingdoms of the earth, and the perſecuting of them that differ from them, or any party of them, under pretence of defending Chriſt's kingdom by the ſword.

CHAP. IV.

Of the proper means whereby the kingdom of Chriſt is ſet up, maintained, and advanced in the world.

OUR Lord having ſet aſide the way of eſtabliſhing a kingdom the moſt feaſible in man's eyes, and the way of which his own diſciples ſeemed very fond, proceeds to declare the way of ſetting up, advancing, and defending his kingdom in the world: "Jeſus anſwered, Thou ſayſt that I "am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe "came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto "the truth."

SECT. I.

THIS kingdom is not ſet up, maintained, or advanced in the world, by human policy, but by the truth. It might be expected, that when the power of the ſword is laid aſide, there would be the more need of this kind of wiſdom. But inſtead of this wiſdom, we have here the truth. They that were employed at firſt in ſetting up and promoting this kingdom in the world, uſed great plainneſs of ſpeech, and ſpake naked truth without diſguiſe: 2 Cor. iv. 1. 2. "Therefore, "ſeeing we have this miniſtry, as we have received mercy, "we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of diſ- "honeſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor handling the word "of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the truth, com- "mending ourſelves to every man's conſcience, as in the "ſight of God." And, upon a review of their conduct, they had this to ſay, 2 Cor. i. 12. "Our rejoicing is this, the teſti- "mony of our conſcience, that, in ſimplicity and godly ſin- "cerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, "we have had our converſation in the world, and more a- "bundantly to you-wards." And this belongs unto that wiſdom which is peculiar to the kingdom of Chriſt, and is oppoſed to the wiſdom of this world, after this manner, 1 Cor. iii. 18. 19. 20. "Let no man deceive himſelf. If "any man among you ſeemeth to be wiſe in this world, let "him become a fool, that he may be wiſe. For the wiſdom "of this world is fooliſhneſs with God. For it is written, "He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs; and again,

"The

" The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are " vain." If we consider that context, we may find this kind of wisdom pointed at, as one of the things that defile the temple of God, being most useful in carrying on party-designs, and managing feuds. And we may see what the Apostle James says of this wisdom, and how he distinguishes it from that wisdom which is from above, James iii. 13. 17.

Yet there are some things brought, as from the word of God, for the use of this kind of wisdom in advancing the kingdom of Christ. That which the Apostle wipes off as a foul aspersion cast upon him, 2 Cor. xii. 16. 17. 18. " Be- " ing crafty, I caught you with guile," is by some adduced to this purpose, and they call it " holy guile!" And his making the gospel of Christ without charge to the Corinthians, though he had power to be chargeable to them, and his becoming a servant to the various tempers and dispositions of men, in indifferent things, for the gospel's sake, that he might gain their souls to Christ, and save them, 1 Cor. ix. 18.—23. is pleaded to patronise our walking in crafty compliances with the corrupt inclinations of the men of this world, in order to gain an authority over them, to save ourselves from the effects of the world's hatred, and to advance our worldly interest. This did not Paul.

SECT. II.

THE kingdom of Christ is set up, maintained, and advanced in the world, by bearing witness unto the truth; and so not by the strength of human reasoning, nor by the moving influences of human eloquence.

This truth has wisdom in it, " even the hidden wisdom of " God, which none of the princes of this world knew;" and there is an utterance in bearing witness unto this truth, which they that know, can distinguish from human reason and eloquence. But our Lord came not into the world to teach moral philosophy, nor to oblige men to acknowledge the truth by the force of philosophical argument, nor to entice them to embrace it by the charms of rhetoric: for he came to bear witness unto the truth.

This faithful and true witness gave his testimony on the earth in the days of his flesh, and now bears witness to us from heaven, from whence he speaks in the ministry of the gospel, Heb. xii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 12. His ministers that are sent by

by him are his witneſſes, declaring unto men the teſtimony of God. They muſt have ſome acquaintance with this teſtimony themſelves, at leaſt by that illumination which is called common, and is the foundation of all thoſe gifts that are for the edification of the church, 1 Cor. xii. 4.—7. And they muſt lay open what they thus know to the world, proclaiming it as Chriſt's meſſengers, or declaring it as his witneſſes. This is preaching. Now, as it would be very unſuitable for a herald making a proclamation, or a witneſs bearing teſtimony, to philoſophiſe or harangue, to diſpute or dreſs up his diſcourſe in all the beauties of eloquence, in order to perſuade men of what he teſtifies; ſo it is in this caſe. And this ſerves rather to make the teſtimony ſuſpected. If by force of argument or eloquence, he can induce men to acknowledge and receive what he teſtifies, ſo as to anſwer the deſign of it, what uſe is there for that teſtimony which he declares?

When we embrace the goſpel in the proper way, ſo as to be ſaved by it, it is by divine faith receiving the divine teſtimony: "For if we receive the witneſs of men, the witneſs "of God is greater. He that believeth, hath this witneſs "in himſelf," 1 John v. 9. 10. Our Lord, ſpeaking of the evidence given to the Jews for his being the Meſſiah, John's miniſtry, and beyond that the works given him to finiſh, doth at length ſend them to the teſtimony of God in the word, declaring, that "they believed not, becauſe they had "not his word abiding in them," whatever regard to it they profeſſed, John v. 32.—39. There is an extrinſic evidence for Chriſtianity, which may ſtop the mouths of gainſayers, and move men to attend to the divine teſtimony in the word of ſcripture-revelation; but the faith whereby men are ſaved, doth not ſtand on this extrinſic evidence, but on the evidence that is in the divine teſtimony itſelf. Some would make our faith to be the aſſent to the concluſion of ſuch a ſyllogiſm as this: "Whatever God ſays is true; but God ſays this; "therefore this is true." But the buſineſs of faith is with that propoſition, "God ſays this." There is not ſo much occaſion for faith to ſhew us, that whatſoever God ſays is true, and that if he ſays this, it muſt be true. The great pinch where faith is needful, is in the making out to us that God ſays this; and the province of faith is, to give aſſent to this propoſition. Whatever way it be therefore that this is made out to me, in that way comes my perſuaſion of it. If my perſuaſion be in the aſſent to the concluſion of a philoſophical argument, then it is ſcience, not faith; if my perſuaſion

sion go upon the evidence of human testimony, then it is human faith; and if my persuasion go upon evidence that the divine testimony carries in itself, then it is truly divine faith.

No man can say, it is impossible that God should testify his mind and will in such a revelation as we have in the writings of the inspired prophets and apostles, and give abundant evidence that it is he that speaks in this word itself. Neither will it be manifested to be impossible, that by means of this revelation, he should frame the minds of those whom he will have to understand it, into a suitableness to this his truth, and make them capable to discern this evidence, in having a true understanding of the truth which he testifies, and which carries this evidence in itself. Yea, it cannot well be conceived, how we can be furnished, in another manner, with a new set of principles by a divine revelation. But men will have the Most High to satisfy them of the truth of his revelation in their own way: "The Jews required a sign, and "the Greeks sought after wisdom." The Jews saw signs; but were they satisfied with them? No: "As many of them "as received not the witness of God in themselves," and had not his word abiding in them, "believed not" unto salvation. And our Lord tells us, Luke xvi. 31. "If they hear not Mo-"ses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though "one rose from the dead." And if the Greeks that sought after wisdom, had lived unto these days, they had seen abundance of that kind of wisdom they were seeking for, brought forth to evidence the truth of the gospel; and some men satisfying themselves so much in it, as to imagine, that their assent, upon this evidence of their own production, is indeed divine faith; yea, and to ridicule all pretences unto any higher evidence of another kind, as enthusiastic imaginations. When these men come to inquire into the meaning of this revelation, whereof they pretend to be thus convinced, they explain it to themselves by that same wisdom, whereby they convince themselves, that the revelation comes from God. Thus the Greek would find his wisdom in the gospel, and it should no more be so ridiculous to him, as sometime a day it was; but then I am mistaken, if he would be much the wiser or better by it; and it is plain, that the blessed fruits of the gospel brought forth by them that believed it, as it was the jest of the Greeks, have not attended this new faith, even in them that make most of it.

But, says the Apostle, we have a better way of doing to convince men; we declare the testimony of God, 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2.

1. 2. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stum-
" bling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto
" them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the
" power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. i. 23. 24.

In this testimony, and the subject of it, so soon as it is truly discerned, the Jew will find the power of God in a far more glorious manner than in all his signs, even the power of God unto his salvation; and this is the sign of the prophet Jonas, Matth. xii. 38. 39. 40. The Greek will find here the wisdom of God unto his salvation, excelling his as far as God excells him, confounding his wisdom, and making all his wisdom of words, his disputing eloquent wisdom, " foolish-
" ness:" for here he will see more than notions or words,
" even the deep things of God," and " the wisdom of God
" in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which none of the prin-
" ces of this world knew," and which " was ordained before
" the world unto" our "glory." Thus both Jew and Greek will find more satisfaction in the gospel than they were inquiring for. But who will find this? Only the Jews and Greeks that are called of God by this testimony concerning Christ crucified. The rest, both Jews and Greeks, will remain where they were, stumbling at the preaching of the cross, and counting it foolishness, because they find not that in it which they were requiring and seeking after.

Every one that is persuaded upon this evidence, sees with his own eyes. The unwise and unlearned need not take the truths of this revelation, and the meaning of it, upon trust, from the men of wisdom, because they have not ability nor leisure to satisfy themselves about it. The Jew needs not be obliged to the Greek for his wisdom, nor needs the Greek the signs of the Jew here; for unto both Jews and Greeks that are called, Christ crucified, testified of in the gospel, is " the power of God, and the wisdom of God." This evidence that the divine testimony carries in itself, is for men of all sorts whom the Lord shall call. The wisdom of the wise man is no advantage to him, as to the receiving this evidence; nor is the stupidity and foolishness of the unwise any loss to him in this case: " Yea, God hath chosen the foolish
" things of the world to confound the wise, and hides these
" things from the wise and prudent, while he reveals them
" unto babes. No man can see" these things " except he
" be born again;" and the unwise, that have not a discerning of the disputing wisdom of words, nor a taste for the pleasures of human eloquence, stand as fair for this, as the disputer

ter of this world. When the unwise receives the testimony of God upon its own evidence, though it make him wise unto salvation, it does not turn him into a philosopher; and when the wise man believes the testimony of God, it makes him indeed wiser than ever he was before, yet not with that wisdom which he sought after, and wherein he once gloried; for it makes that wisdom foolishness to him, and now he is taught to glory only in the Lord Christ, who is made of God to him wisdom. Thus God, in saving sinners, stains the pride of man's glory, (and there is nothing whereof men desire to glory more than their understanding and wisdom), that he alone may be exalted. We fell from God, affecting to be as gods for knowledge; and it was every way meet that God, in recovering us to himself, should effectually humble us in this respect, glorifying his own wisdom, and staining the pride of ours.

This truth of the gospel, whereby Christ advances his kingdom in the world, is practical; and when it is received upon its proper evidence, it must influence the practice: but all that evidence which is by some set up as the only true evidence upon which we receive the gospel, may be, and is clearly perceived by men, that are no wise influenced by the gospel in their practice. For what should hinder them to perceive it? Many such have as clear wits, and as much thirst for philosophical knowledge, as other men. What then should make such a man a Christian in his practice? His corrupt affections certainly must be rectified. But how should that be, if it be not by the light and evidence of the gospel? Yet he has that evidence already, and he is the same man still. But if this is to be done with a blind influence of power without light, how shall our wise men understand this, or reconcile this kind of dealing with a rational man? To be moved thus, and influenced blindly to live the Christian life, must certainly be unto these men as ridiculous, as the true way of receiving the gospel is. Therefore this man must have more light to make him a Christian than our philosophers can afford him; and that is no other than the light that shines in the truth of the gospel itself, the testimony of Jesus Christ, which when he is enabled to behold, will effectually change him, and conform him to itself in heart and life, so far as he beholds it. Now, this is by means of the "foolishness of preaching," or declaring unto men the testimony of God in such a way as is, unto the wise men of this world, foolishness; and when the truth of the gospel is received, by this means, "not as the

" word of man, (but as it is indeed) the word of God, it " worketh effectually in all them that thus believe it."

Men may have all that perſuaſion of the truth of the Chriſtian religion which the extrinſic evidence can afford, without diſcerning the glory, or feeling the power of any one truth of the goſpel: and whence is this, but that they receive not the truth of the goſpel upon its proper evidence, and ſo indeed receive it not at all? for whatever may be pretended, they that diſcern not the glory of goſpel-truth, and in whom it works not effectually, " do not receive it, " and believe it, as it is in truth, the word of God," 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. Col. i. 6. 1 John v. 19. 20. 1 John ii. 4. " He that " ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, " is a liar, and the truth is not in him." And however much they who deſpiſe the evidence proper to the goſpel as enthuſiaſtic, may value themſelves upon doing ſuch things, and leading ſuch a life, as an infidel may lead as well as they; yet it is impoſſible, that the peculiar fruits of that faith which works by love, and purifies the ſoul unto unfeigned love of the brethren, can be found with them, or that they ſhould have thoſe works to produce, by which the Apoſtle James calls men " to ſhew their faith," and by which our Lord will try the faith of the hearers of the goſpel at his ſecond coming, Matth. xxv. 31.—46.

This perſuaſion of the goſpel, which produces fruits ſuitable to the goſpel, is begotten in men, neither by the ſigns of the Jew, nor the wiſdom of the Greek, however theſe may ſerve to make men attentive to the goſpel, and render them inexcuſable in an open rejection of it; but by this bearing witneſs unto the truth. Chriſt himſelf is the witneſs, and the goſpel preached by his miniſters is his teſtimony; and whoſoever " receives his teſtimony has ſet to his ſeal that " God is true." In him we have all the perſons of the Godhead bearing witneſs unto us. The Father ſpeaks to us only in him, and by him; " and none knoweth the Father, ſave the " Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him," Matth. xi. 27. " God, who, at ſundry times, and in divers manners, " ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath " in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son,—the bright- " neſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon," Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. " And the Spirit of truth," the Holy Ghoſt, " given by the Father," without meaſure unto him the Son of man, " is ſent by him from the Father," and bears witneſs to us in the goſpel, Iſ. lxi. 1. 2. John iii. 34. xiv. 16. 17.

17. xv. 26. 27. and xvi. 13. 14. 15. Thus the teſtimony of Jeſus is the teſtimony of the glorious Three that now bear record in heaven, 1 John v. 7. When Jeſus began his miniſtry on the earth, there was a glorious manifeſtation of theſe Three at his baptiſm, Matth. iii. 16. 17.; but now they witneſs glorioufly in heaven, in the teſtimony of Jeſus which we have now from thence. Jeſus Chriſt began to teſtify in his miniſtry upon the earth, and was then declared very far to excel all that came before him. John Baptiſt, greater than all the prophets, teſtifies of him, that he was preferred before him, though coming after him; and that on theſe accounts, 1. Becauſe "he was before him," (the eternal God), John i. 15.; and becauſe he is "from above," (the Lord from heaven), John iii. 31.; and to this agrees our Lord's ſaying, "I was born, and I came unto the world, to bear witneſs "unto the truth." 2. Becauſe he was upon all the counſels of God, and in the contrivance of the great things brought to light by him, John iii. 32. "What he hath ſeen and heard, "that he teſtifieth." John i. 18. "No man hath ſeen God "at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bo- "ſom of the Father, he hath declared him." 3. Becauſe the Father giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him, John iii. 34. The man Chriſt Jeſus was furniſhed with the Spirit for the exerciſe of his prophetical office on the earth beyond all the prophets, and his hearers wondered at all the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and were obliged to own that he ſpake with a peculiar authority, and "that never "man ſpake like this man." But now having aſcended to the right hand of the Father, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Spirit, he ſpeaks from heaven in a far more glorious and powerful manner; and when he began to teſtify from thence, he made his rude Galileans ſpeak in an amazing manner "the wonderful things of God," Acts ii. 7. 11. John xvi. 12. 13. Eph. iv. 10.—13.

And this is that prophet that was promiſed to the church by Moſes, Deut. xviii. 14.—19. His voice at Sinai, that ſhook the earth, was ſo terrible, that the children of Iſrael ſaid unto Moſes, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: "but let not God ſpeak with us, leſt we die," Exod. xx. 19. And according to this the Lord ſaid to Moſes, "They "have well ſpoken that which they have ſpoken: I will raiſe "them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto "thee." In hearing the voice of this our brother, the antitype of Moſes, we hear the voice of the Lord our God, with-

out that fear: for now "he hath taken part with us in flesh "and blood; for which cause he is not ashamed to call us "brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my bre-"thren."

His kingdom is set up and advanced in the world by the exercise of this his prophetical office; and thus we see how his prophetical and kingly offices are connected. His kingdom is a kingdom of light, into which we are translated from the power of darkness, Col. i. 13. And "he is a commander "to the people, by being a witness to them," Is. lv. 4. "He "bears witness unto the truth; and every one that is of the "truth, heareth his voice."

SECT. III.

PIlate saw that our Lord laid great stress upon this truth; and though he despised truth as a mean of setting up a kingdom, when he proposed that scornful question, "What "is truth?" and waited not for an answer; yet it becomes us diligently to inquire, till we be satisfied, what this truth is: and though it was not fit that Pilate should know it at that time, seeing, as we may hear, it respected Christ's cross; yet it is of the utmost importance and advantage to us to know it now.

We find God's mercy and his truth much spoken of and celebrated in the Old Testament. It is the promise of Christ that is intended; and truly God's mercy and truth together are no where to be found but with him, Psal. lxxxix. 24. They that saw his glory, when he came in the flesh, found him "full of grace and truth," John i. 14. He testifies of himself, "that he is the truth," John xiv. 6. "In him," the Son of God manifest in the flesh, "the end of the law for right-"eousness unto every one that believeth, all the promi-"ses of God are yea and amen," 2 Cor. i. 20. So that he is the great subject of this his testimony in the gospel; and in order to understand what he mainly intends by truth here, we must consider how he is especially set forth in the gospel, to be believed in unto salvation, and what doctrine of the gospel it is whereby it is especially distinguished both from Judaism and natural religion.

We shall find, that the great thing testified of him in the gospel is, that he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and we are told,

told, "that he that believeth this in his heart, and confeſſeth "it with his mouth, ſhall be ſaved," Rom. iv. 24. 25. and x. 4. 8. 9. 10. When the Apoſtle declares himſelf not aſhamed of the goſpel, and calls it the power of God unto ſalvation, he tells us, it is becauſe "therein is the righteouſneſs of God "revealed," from the faithfulneſs of God to the faith of every believer, Rom. i. 16. 17. When he gives an account of the great ſubject of the goſpel-meſſage, he tells us it is this, "God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not "imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.— And be reconciled "to God: for he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew "no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in "him." 2 Cor. v. 18.—21. And when he ſpeaks of the teſtimony of God, the object of ſaving faith, he tells us, "it "is Chriſt crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2. 1 Cor. i. 23. 24. This was the great intent of the prophecies, which ſpake of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the following glory: "For to him "gave all the prophets witneſs, that through his name who-"ſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſin," Acts x. 43. This therefore is that truth of the goſpel which is eſpecially witneſſed unto, and whereby Chriſt ſays, "his king-"dom is advanced in the world." And this may be further clear unto us if we conſider,

1. That this is the diſtinguiſhing truth of Chriſtianity, whereby it is differenced from mere natural religion, and from all the religions in the world that any way compete with it. This is the great thing, the firſt thing, that any religion can propoſe to ſinful men, How they ſhould be pardoned, reconciled to God, and juſtified in his ſight? If the Chriſtian religion differ from others in any thing, it is in this: they all propoſe other ways of coming into favour with God, and falſe ways; but Chriſt has made peace by the blood of his croſs, and thereby reconciled all his people, of all nations, unto God in one body; and has come and preached this peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh; and this is the truth wherein the true God is glorioufly manifeſted and diſtinguiſhed from every falſe god.

2. God's truth in the juſt ſentence of his broken law, and in the promiſe of life to ſinners, meets and conſiſts only in Chriſt, our Redeemer from the curſe of the law, by being made a curſe for us, that the bleſſing might come upon us: and therefore this may well be called *the truth*.

The law condemned us in a head and repreſentative; and there was nothing in it to hinder our ſuffering in another head,

head, if God ſhould think it meet: and they who are juſtified in Chriſt, were as verily puniſhed in him, and as verily fulfilled the law in him, "as they ſinned in Adam," Rom. v. 15.—19. Thus, when God pardons a ſinner, and juſtifies him in Chriſt, he no wiſe makes void the law; ſeeing we have fulfilled it in Chriſt our head unto far better purpoſe than if we had undergone the curſe by ourſelves without him. So when he holds us guiltleſs, he does not hold us guiltleſs, and clearing he does not clear, according to a phraſe frequently uſed in the Old Teſtament, but always ſpoiled in our tranſlation, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. Numb. xiv. 18. "That will "by no means clear the guilty." It ſhould be, "clearing "will not clear." Jer. xxx. 11. it is ſaid to the church, "Though I make a full end of all nations, I will not make "a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in meaſure," (or, I'll take a wiſe way of correcting thee), "and will not leave "thee altogether unpuniſhed." It ſhould be, "and clearing "will not clear:" for the phraſe is the ſame here as in Exodus, though differently tranſlated. We may find the ſame phraſe, Jer. xlvi. 28. Nah. i. 3.

3. This is the truth of the legal ſhadows: "The law was "given by Moſes, but truth came by Jeſus Chriſt, who is "the end of the law for righteouſneſs unto every one that "believeth." See Heb. ix. and x. And in this truth the promiſes of God are Yea and Amen: For it is either the accompliſhment, or the foundation of the accompliſhment, of them all, 1 Pet. i. 11.

4. This truth concerning Chriſt delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification, is that wherein the ſtamp of divine authority on ſcripture-revelation is chiefly manifeſt. All the parts of this revelation depend on this, and are connected with it: ſo that, take away this truth out of the goſpel, it will be another goſpel, and the whole doctrine of the prophets and apoſtles will be utterly made of none effect, as to eternal life and ſalvation. That faith whereby we ſavingly believe ſcripture revelation, is faith in the blood of the Son of God; and by this faith we receive the whole ſcripture-revelation, which does all, from beginning to end, one way or other relate unto this. And this is the great touchſtone for the trial of true and falſe doctrine. See Heb. xiii. 7.—10. Eph. iv. 13. 14. 15.

5. This truth, witneſſed unto in the goſpel, is the great mean whereby the power of God is put forth to ſave ſinners, and to ſubject them to him in his kingdom, Luke i. 77. Gal. iii.

Gal. iii. 2. Rom. i. 16. 17. 1 Cor. i. 18. 23. 24. Col. i. 13. 14. It was by the revelation of Christ's righteousness in the gospel, that Christ's kingdom was at first set up and advanced in the world; and it was by the revival of this great truth, after it had been buried under Antichrist's reign, that the Lord began to consume that wicked one at the reformation. Luther said, "This article reigns in my heart, and with this "the church stands or falls." Without this great truth, all other means for promoting or defending the kingdom of Christ will be altogether ineffectual; yea, on the contrary, serve to advance the kingdom of Satan. The strength of Christ's kingdom, and its safety, lies all in this truth: so that they who would advance this kingdom in the world, must bear it about with them in their hearts, in all their preaching, and in all their conversation in the ministry. And truly this would be a spring of daily refreshment to themselves, and of great liberty and boldness in all the labour of the gospel-ministry, and in all the sufferings that attend it.

6. To the same purpose also we might consider the name whereby Christ is called among the subjects of his kingdom, *The Lord our Righteousness*; and that great motto of the church whereby it is distinguished from all other societies, Jer. xxxiii. 16. "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Je-"rusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith "she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."

Thus we see the connection betwixt the kingdom of Christ and his priesthood. This King is Melchisedeck, King of righteousness, and a priest on his throne: and the influence of his priesthood on his kingdom is set before us, Psal. ii. 8. Psal. cx. Is. lii. 11. 12. All the glory of Christ's kingdom follows upon and flows from his sufferings; and they never served him in his kingdom, whatever they may pretend, that did not first submit unto his righteousness.

CHAP. V.

Of the subjects of Christ's kingdom.

THE last thing to be considered in this testimony of our Lord, is the account he gives of his subjects. He is not ashamed to confess them, and his relation to every one of them; and far less reason have they to be ashamed to confess him, or to be ashamed of one another.

He

He says, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my "voice."

Here we must consider, 1. What it is to be "of the truth." 2. What is the import of that, "Every one that is of the "truth." 3. What it is "to hear Christ's voice." And, 4. What is the connection betwixt "being of the truth," and "hearing his voice."

If these things be understood, we cannot be at a loss about the subjects of this kingdom on earth.

SECT. I.

WE have had some account of that truth by which our Lord here describes his subjects. Now, it concerns those that would know if they have any part in this kingdom of Christ, to understand well what it is to be "of this truth."

There is an expression, Rom. vi. 17. which seems to have a near alliance with this, and may serve to clear it: "Ye "were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart "that form of doctrine which was delivered you;" or, more agreeably to the first language, "that type, or frame, or "mould of doctrine, into which ye were delivered." The doctrine here pointed to by the Apostle seems to be the same with that truth of which our Lord speaks, even the gospel of Christ; as it "reveals the righteousness of God from faith to "faith, that the just may live by faith;" and manifests the righteousness of God without the law, "which is witnessed "by the law and the prophets", Rom. iii. 21. Of this great doctrine the Apostle had been treating in the foregoing part of the epistle; and in this chapter he is shewing the connection betwixt justification and sanctification, and declaring the influence that this blessed doctrine of justification has upon sinners to sanctify them; and this in opposition to a common objection, and an error into which men are very ready to fall, who have not a true insight into the doctrine of God's glorious free grace in the justification of guilty sinners through the righteousness of Christ alone. To this purpose he had said, ℣ 14. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye "are not under the law, but under grace:" and here he tells them to whom he writes, that "they were the servants "of sin;" but it was matter of thankfulness to God, that they were delivered from that slavery; and still the greater ground of thankfulness, the more they had been inslaved. And by what means were they delivered from the bondage of sin,

ſin, and made ſervants of righteouſneſs? He tells it was by that doctrine. Yet the bare outward revelation, and their hearing and having a notion of that doctrine, as they had of other doctrines they heard, was not ſufficient unto this: "Ye "have obeyed," ſays he, "from the heart, that mould of "doctrine into which ye were caſt; and ſo being freed from "the ſervice of ſin, they became ſervants of righteouſneſs." That bleſſed doctrine was as a mould unto their hearts, into which they being caſt, and new framed, became anſwerable unto it; and ſo were freed from the yoke of ſin, and fitted unto the ſervice of righteouſneſs. Thus the Apoſtle expreſſes the work of regeneration, and our union with Chriſt, by means of the doctrine of juſtification by the free grace of God, "through the redemption that is in Chriſt's blood." And ſo he ſhows the influence that this doctrine has upon our ſanctification; as he does further, Rom. vii. 4. 5. 6. And by this we may ſee what it is to be "of the truth."

1. To be of this truth, is to be, as it were, caſt into it as in a mould, and framed according to it: "That form of "doctrine whereinto ye were delivered."

This truth is not at all of us. For as it is none of thoſe principles which are commonly called natural to us, ſo we do not receive it as we do concluſions that we draw from or by thoſe principles; nor do we admit it on the account of its agreeableneſs unto thoſe principles of ours. It is altogether foreign to us naturally; and yet it is a truth that muſt be a moſt powerfully practical principle in us to make us live a new life, unto which all the principles we had before, howſoever improved by us, could never influence us. And therefore it muſt be as deeply rooted in our minds as any of our principles, and have ſuch poſſeſſion in our ſouls, as to maſter all thoſe corrupt principles that have taken ſuch ſeat in the minds of all mankind, as to overpower all the right dictates of the natural conſcience, and, in ſpite of them, to influence mankind into a life of ſin. Now, it is evident, we cannot bring home this truth to dwell after this manner in our ſouls.

On the contrary, when a ſinner begins to be convinced of his ſin, and of the judgment of God againſt him, and is rouſed to hearken to the dictates of his conſcience, he labours to anſwer thoſe dictates; and ſo goes about to make amends for his ſin himſelf, and to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of his own. But the farther he goes on in this way, as he ſtrengthens ſin the more, Rom. vii. 5. 9. ſo he fortifies himſelf the more againſt the entrance of this truth into his ſoul;

eſpecially if he imagines himſelf any wiſe ſucceſsful in his attempts after righteouſneſs upon natural principles. And if the natural conſcience be thoroughly awakened, it will influence the ſinner, after all his attempts to ſatisfy it, unto deſpair. For it knows nothing of the imputed righteouſneſs, and can take no ſatisfaction in it, till this truth take poſſeſſion of the ſoul: and it requires as much to ſatisfy the duly awakened conſcience as to ſatisfy the juſtice of God.

It is alſo manifeſt in them who know theſe things in their experience, that as there is a great enmity in the heart of man againſt God, ſo this enmity ſhows itſelf eſpecially againſt this truth; becauſe therein is made the moſt glorious diſcovery of God, and becauſe it is that which effectually brings us near him, and conforms us to him.

And ſuch is the pride of man's heart, and ſo much does this truth ſtain the pride of his glorying, that the mind and heart of man will by no means ſubmit to it, but rather be engaged in the hardeſt labour for ſelf-righteouſneſs or deſpair, and give up with all hopes of eternal life, than ſubmit to, and take reſt in the righteouſneſs which this truth brings unto us. So it cannot be of us to receive this truth to bear ſway in our ſouls; and it is no wonder that there have been ſo many ſubtile reaſonings againſt it, ſo many perplexing diſputes about it, and ſo many ſorts of oppoſition made unto it, ſince it has been publiſhed and profeſſed in the world.

This truth comes into our minds and hearts from above, by divine teaching, and it is "ingrafted in our minds," Jam. i. 21. Not growing naturally in them, but brought from elſewhere, and ingrafted, that we may bring forth a new kind of fruit, according to the nature of the graft, and not according to the nature of the ſtock into which it is grafted. It is as the ſeed whereby we are "begotten of God unto a new life." Jam. i. 18. "Of his own will," not of ours, "begat he us "with the word of truth." It is that ſeed of which we are born again: 1 Pet. i. 22.—25. "Seeing ye have purified "your ſouls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto "unfeigned love of the brethren; love one another with a "pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible "ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which "liveth and abideth for ever. For all fleſh is as graſs, and "all the glory of man as the flower of graſs. The graſs "withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the "word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word "which by the goſpel is preached unto you."

They

They in whoſe minds and hearts this truth is ingrafted, and who are begotten and born again of this incorruptible ſeed, are "of the truth;" and theſe are they whoſe ſouls are caſt into the mould of the goſpel-revelation of righteouſneſs in Chriſt, "delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our "juſtification."

This is that regeneration, that new birth, wherein we are united to Chriſt as members of his body, and wherein our whole conformity to him takes its beginning. So far are we conformed to God's image in Chriſt, and ſubjected unto him, as this truth takes place in us, and not a whit farther.

We may likewiſe notice, that to be of this truth, is the ſame as to be of faith, Gal. iii. which is oppoſed to being of the works of the law.

2. To be of this truth is to believe it. They that are delivered into that form of doctrine, do obey it. And the way that we obey a truth teſtified unto, is by believing it upon the authority of the teſtifier. In believing this doctrine, there is a ſubjection of the mind unto the authority of God in his teſtimony, which is in this doctrine. Thus we are ſaid to obey that form of doctrine into which we are delivered. And this perſuaſion of this truth, upon the evidence of the divine teſtimony in it, is indeed that faith whereby we are juſtified, and eternally ſaved. And this is that which the ſcripture ſeems mainly to intend, when it ſpeaks of faith, and calls us to believe. See 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 1 John v. 9. 10. John iv. 42. John iii. 33. John vi. 68. 69. This is that faith "which is "the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things ho-"ped for," Heb. xi. 1. This perſuaſion of the truth is, 1. That faith whereby we are juſtified, and which has the promiſe of bleſſedneſs: Matth. xvi. 16. 17. "Simon Peter an-"ſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living "God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art "thou Simon Barjona; for fleſh and blood hath not revealed "it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Rom. x. 6. 8. 9. 10. "But the righteouſneſs which is of faith, ſpeaketh "on this wiſe:—— The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and "in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach, "That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, "and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him "from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart "man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth con-"feſſion is made unto ſalvation." We may take notice, that the heart is not here oppoſed unto the mind, as is commonly

thought, but unto the mouth. 2. This is that faith whereby a troubled conſcience comes firſt to true peace and quiet: Pſal. cxxx. 4. "But there is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou "mayſt be feared." 3. This is that faith which is the prime fruit and evidence of the new birth, and whereby God dwelleth in us, and we in him: 1 John v. 1. "Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God." 1 John iv. 15. "Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, "God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 4. And this is that faith that overcomes the world, and is our victory over the world, and all the luſts and temptations of it: 1 John v. 4. 5. "For whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world: "and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our "faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that "believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God? This is he "that came by water and blood;—and it is the Spirit that "beareth witneſs, becauſe the Spirit is truth."

Thus the ſcripture-notion of faith agrees with the common notion of faith and belief among men, a perſuaſion of a thing upon teſtimony. But that faith whereby we believe the goſpel, has been very much darkened, by the many things that have been ſaid in the deſcription of it; while that which is moſt properly faith, has been either ſhut up in a narrow and dark corner of the deſcription, or almoſt excluded from it, as a thing preſuppoſed unto faith, and not that very faith itſelf whereby we are juſtified and ſaved. And ſome have ſo defined faith, as to take in into its own nature the whole of goſpel-obedience. Agreeably to this, we have heard in ſermons, that it has two hands, one to receive Chriſt, and another to give ourſelves away to him. And when we are preſſed and exhorted to believe in Chriſt, it is as if we were urged to put forth ſome we do not know what act of the will, or to give forth ſomething towards Chriſt by God's help, by which we are to be ſaved, on account of the connection made in the promiſe betwixt ſalvation, and that deed, whatever it be, which is called *faith*. By this means the hearers of the goſpel are ſet on to ſeek to do that deed, that work, called *faith*, to ſave them, and intitle them to eternal life. And ſerious ſouls are perplexed with many fruitleſs inquiries in themſelves, whether they have this thing called *faith*; while that which lies at the bottom of moſt part of their doubts, is either the weakneſs or the want of the perſuaſion of this truth, and their taking no notice of it, becauſe it is not much noticed in the accounts of faith that are made to them. And

it

it is fooliſhly reckoned by many, that the belief of the truth is a common thing, and that it is no great matter to attain unto it; though the Apoſtle hath ſaid, "God hath from the "beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification "of the Spirit, and belief of the truth," 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. This glorious truth, containing in it "Chriſt the end of the "law for righteouſneſs unto every one that believe it," is able to give reſt to the weary ſoul, to make a bleſſed calm in the moſt troubled conſcience, and to raiſe up the moſt deſperate ſinner unto a lively hope. All this influence it hath upon them that believe, and in their believing of it. Therefore, while this is not attended to, it is a vain thing to labour after the aſſurance of hope: for where faith in this truth is not in exerciſe, neither the thing hoped for, nor the true ground of hope, can be diſcerned; "faith being the ſubſtance "of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen." It is impoſſible to have a "lively hope through the reſurrection "of Chriſt," without a lively faith in him, "delivered for "our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification." Therefore they begin at the wrong end, that preſs after the aſſurance of hope, without laying the foundation of the aſſurance of faith.

But what is this aſſurance, this πληροφορία, of faith? There are miſtakes about this. For ſome, perhaps, finding all their endeavours after the aſſurance of hope, without the lively faith of this great truth of the goſpel, altogether fruitleſs; and being at length brought to clear and ſure belief of this truth, and finding their conſciences quieted, the diſpoſition of their hearts changed, by the influence of this truth, and hope ariſing in their ſouls; they have imagined, that all this flowed at firſt from an aſſurance of Chriſt's being made fully theirs, and a certainty of their own ſalvation by him: and ſo they have made that the nature of faith. Whereas theſe fruits take their firſt riſe from the truth believed; and not from a perſuaſion of our intereſt in it, and of the abſolute certainty of our ſalvation; which is the aſſurance of hope, and muſt ariſe from faith with the fruits of it, Heb. vi. 11. Therefore we find the ſaints in the New Teſtament, when profeſſing their aſſurance of hope, always ſpeaking therewith of their faith, and the fruits of it. See 1 John iii. 23. 24.

The aſſurance of faith can be the aſſurance of no other thing but what is propoſed in the goſpel unto all the hearers of it, to be believed by them, upon hearing it, unto their ſalvation. But it is evident it is not revealed unto every goſpel-

ſpel hearer, that Chriſt is abſolutely given unto him, and that he ſhall be ſaved; becauſe this is not true; and therefore every hearer of the goſpel is not bound to believe this concerning himſelf: nor will the hearers of the goſpel that periſh, be damned for not believing that they ſhould never be damned. Seeing then the aſſurance of faith is the aſſurance of what is laid out in common to every goſpel-hearer, to be believed for their ſalvation; and ſeeing it was never, nor can be at any time, a truth, that Chriſt is abſolutely given certainly to ſave every goſpel hearer, or that every goſpel-hearer ſhall be ſaved; we muſt have another notion of the aſſurance of faith. And the ſcripture is very clear in this matter. When it ſpeaks of the aſſurance of faith at its higheſt, it calls it the full aſſurance of underſtanding to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, Col. ii. 2. And what is that, but a full perſuaſion of the truth of which Chriſt ſpeaks, when he ſays, "Every one that is of the truth, "heareth my voice?"

So then, whoſoever is verily perſuaded of this truth that Chriſt bears witneſs unto, and that upon the credit of his teſtimony, and the evidence that it carries in itſelf, is of this truth; and this faith or belief is the fruit of the ſoul's being caſt into the mould of that doctrine, without which no obedience can be given unto it.

3. They that are of the truth obey it from the heart; they love it. As this teſtimony of Jeſus is received by faith, whereby we ſet to our ſeal that God is true, having the witneſs in ourſelves; ſo there is the greateſt good propoſed in this truth to be embraced by us: "He hath ſhewed thee "what is good," Mic. vi. 8. "Eat ye that which is good," If. lv. 2. This is the proper object of love: as faith reſpects the truth witneſſed unto, ſo love reſpects the good in this truth.

This love is another fruit of the new birth, flowing immediately from true faith; and is never, nor can be ſeparated from it. We read of ſome profeſſors of the truth periſhing, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, and this is made an evidence of their not believing it, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10.—13.

This love acts upon Chriſt in this truth, 1. In a way of eſteem, valuing him above all things, and counting all things beſides him, all things that ſtand in competition with him, "loſs and dung." Thus they that truly find Chriſt, are with him, as the wiſe merchant with the pearl of great price, when he

he hath found it, selling all to buy that pearl. Christ is indeed precious to all them that believe, and that to such a degree, that he is their only glory: but the soul that thus loves him, will be grieved that it cannot esteem him more, and will be ready to think it loves him not at all, because it finds not any esteem of him within itself suitable to such a glorious object; and such a soul will be jealous for him against his great rival, self, which is constantly putting in for a share, at least, of that love and esteem which the soul finds only due to him. 2. In a way of earnest desire, expressed by the Apostle, when he says, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things loss,— that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness "which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the "power of his resurrrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings," Phil. iii. They that love and truly desire Christ, find, as it were, a want in them, which nothing but he himself can fill up, and an uneasiness till they enjoy him, arising from faith's apprehension of his complete sufficiency and fulness, his perfect suitableness unto their whole case, and his excellent glory. They desire him, so as to be ready to part with all things, and to suffer the loss of their nearest and dearest things for him; and this desire sets them on to the use of all the means of his own institution for finding him. His word, and all his ordinances, from the least to the greatest of them, are as the field where this their treasure is hid; and therefore "they sell all to buy this field." Christ is especially desired by believers in that respect wherein he is a stumbling-block and foolishness to the world; even his cross, and his righteousness; and they desire him so much on this account, that they breathe after conformity unto him in that same cross. 3. In a way of complacence and delight. The soul having found Christ, and seen his glory shining in this truth by faith, is joyfully satisfied and well-pleased in him and his righteousness, rests under that shadow from all such perplexing inquiries as that, "What shall I do to be saved?" and that with great delight, and seeks no further. The believer takes a peculiar complacence in the wisdom and power of God unto salvation, and in the glorious discovery of the divine attributes, especially the comely complexion of the divine mercy and justice in this truth, and in that wonderful connection betwixt the glory of God and the sinner's salvation, that is to be seen in this truth, and in Christ himself,

ſelf, that glorious perſon, in whom all this is manifeſt. Such is the believer's complacence in Chriſt, that he abhors the neareſt and deareſt things to him, as they ſtand in competition with him. He counts his own righteouſneſs but loſs and dung for him. And "he that hates not father and mo-"ther, and even his own life, for Chriſt, is not worthy of "him." This love to Chriſt is eſpecially manifeſt in our love to all them that are of this truth without exception, on the account of their relation to him; and it is a very vain thing to pretend love to Chriſt, while we love not the leaſt of his little ones, beyond any other ſort of men in the world.

Thus they that are of the truth, love it: and as faith ſays of that word, "Chriſt came into the world to ſave the chief "of ſinners," that it is faithful; ſo love ſays, "It is worthy "of all acceptation." Chriſt's ſubjects are thus devoted unto this truth; it has their hearts, and ſo they are of it.

4. To be of the truth, is to be influenced by it, and to have it working effectually in us, unto all the ends for which it is revealed to us, and received by us, 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. Col. i. 5. 6. We have not this truth as a ſpeculation, only to divert ourſelves with it; or as a precious jewel, only to be laid up that we may pleaſe ourſelves by now and then looking upon it: but it muſt be a living principle of action in us, and muſt be with us, when we lie down and riſe up, and walk by the way, to influence us in the whole of our converſation in the world, and in the whole of the ſervice of God. It is with this truth, and in it, that the Spirit of Chriſt comes to dwell in our ſouls, Gal. iii. 2. And this is the great inſtrument by which he works his gracious works in us. The ſanctification of the ſpirit is with the belief of the truth: "Seeſt thou," ſays James, "how faith wrought with his "works," James ii. 22. And we are told, that "without "faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God," Heb. xi. 6.

As it has been a dangerous error, on the one hand, to think of leading a Chriſtian life, and pleaſing God, abſtractly from this truth; ſo it is a no leſs dangerous error, on the other hand, to think, that we may receive it unto our joy, and deliverance from the torments of hell, without its working effectually in us to make us live unto God. The word of the truth of the goſpel brings forth fruit in all them that know the grace of God in truth: and though in ſtony ground it wither, and among thorns be choaked; yet in good ground (that is, where men obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which they are delivered) it bringeth forth ſometimes

times thirty, sometimes sixty, sometimes an hundred-fold. Thus the truth reigns in them that do believe it; so they obey it from the heart, and so they are of it.

Now we understand what it is to be of the truth, and that it is the same thing that the Apostle calls being of faith, Gal. iii. 7. 9. which, as was noticed, he opposes to being of the deeds of the law. Therefore all that are of the deeds of the law, and submit not to the righteousness of God, but, in their ignorance of the truth, are seeking by some means to establish a righteousness of their own, however sincere they may appear to themselves or others, yet they have not gospel-sincerity in them; for they "have not the truth in their inward parts." The imputation of righteousness without works, and a spirit without-guile, go together, Psal. xxxii. 1. 2. Rom. iv. 6. 7. 8.: and all sincerity and singleness of heart before God is of this truth. With such a true heart it is that the Apostle calls us "to draw near, and come into the holiest by the blood of "Jesus, in full assurance of faith," Heb. x. 19.—22. "The "heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately "wicked," till "the truth, as it is in Jesus," take possession of it, and make the man sincere and upright, so far as it takes place in him, Eph. iv. 21.—25. And therefore it is strange to see sincerity set up, as it were, in opposition to this truth, and the glorious righteousness it brings to us, the only spring of all the godly sincerity that is in the world.

We find singleness of heart taken notice of, as a remarkable fruit of the truth in them that received it, when it came first from Christ, exalted by the right hand of God, Acts ii. 46. And their pretences to the faith of it are very poor, who study not simplicity and godly sincerity, but walk in policy and fleshly wisdom, and glory in the wisdom of this world, as to which the truth will make all them that are of it fools.

SECT. II.

THE subjects of Christ's kingdom are, "Every one that is "of the truth." And these things are imported in this.

1. This truth, with its influence, is not now confined to any sort of men, however qualified, and however excelling others. The uncircumcised nations were excluded from Christ, till he should come, and had no hope in the promise, by means of the wall of partition betwixt the Jews and them; but now Christ having broke down that in his death, and come "preaching peace to them that were afar off and nigh," they both, through him, have an access by one Spirit to the

Father; and it is now free to all nations, all sorts of sinners, even the chief, to believe this truth unto their salvation, and to come into Christ's kingdom by the belief of this truth, Matth. xxii. 9. Mark xvi. 15. 16. Rom. iii. 21. 22. and x. 4. 11. 12. 13. How much reason have we Gentiles to rejoice in the New Testament on this account!

2. It takes no more to make any man a subject of Christ's kingdom, but to be of this truth; and it requires no less. "Every one that is of the truth heareth his voice," is his subject. The Jews, to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promises, cannot by all this be of Christ's kingdom, if they be not of this truth; and the uncircumcised Gentiles are free in this kingdom to the enjoyment of the privileges of it, by being of this truth, without more. Yea, "the "Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have at- "tained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is "of faith: but Israel, which followed after the law of "righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteous- "ness. Wherefore? Because they sought it, not by faith, "but as it were by the works of the law; for they stumbled "at that stumbling-stone," Rom. ix. 30.—33. The circumcision of the Jew leaves him on a level here with the uncircumcised Gentile, and the uncircumcision of the Gentile puts him not a whit behind the Jew as to an interest in this kingdom. The Greek has no advantage by his politeness in this matter; nor is the rudeness of the Barbarian his loss in this case. The slavery of the bondman cannot hinder his freedom in the kingdom of Christ, if he be of this truth, and without this the liberty of the freeman can give him no part in the liberty of Christ, Col. iii. 10. 11.

As none are by us to be accounted subjects of this kingdom, but those whom Christ commands us to reckon his disciples, or that they are of the truth; so all that appear to be of this truth, without difference, are by us to be held for subjects of this kingdom, and to be dealt with accordingly; and because some, under the common influence of the Spirit, receive the word with joy, and so appear for a while to be of this truth, who yet are not of it, and many of them afterward discover themselves, or will be discovered and separated from the people of Christ at his coming, Matth. xiii. & xxv. John xv. 2. 6. Matth. vii. 21.—29. 1 Tim. v. 24. 25. Heb. x. 39. Jude 4.; therefore there is a distinction made between the visible and invisible kingdom of Jesus Christ: and the

the visible is nothing else but the outward appearance of the invisible, such as it now makes, 1 John ii. 19. "They went "out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had "been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; "but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that "they were not all of us."

3. By this truth Christ's subjects are all distinguished and differenced from all others, howsoever agreeing with them in other things, and however related to them, and bound together with them by many other ties. The church stands distinguished from all other societies, as has been noticed, bearing this motto, *The Lord our righteousness*. This truth lies at the bottom of all that division and enmity betwixt the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, and of all that hatred of the men of this world at the subjects of Christ's kingdom: for whatever fair pretences the world may make for this hatred, yet our Lord tells us the true cause of it, when he says, John xvii. 14. "I have given them thy word; "and the world hath hated them, because they are not of "the world, even as I am not of the world" The men of this world may love Christ's subjects on account of other things common to them with the world appearing about them; but as they appear to be of this truth, and keep the testimony of Jesus Christ, they cannot love them; neither do they hate them for those same things that they find with others who are not of this truth, in whom yet they take pleasure.

However we be joined with the people of Christ, if we be not with them in this, we are none of Christ's subjects, nor have we any part in the kingdom of Christ. And all separations from the world, that flow not from this truth, are none of that controversy which the Lord hath established in the the earth between the seed of the woman and the serpent, and are not separations from the world, but divisions in it.

4. In this truth all Christ's subjects are one, however otherwise differenced. They are of different nations, different stations in the world, and of different parties in the world; they have different measures of gifts and grace, different measures of light, whence differences of opinion and practice will be found among them, and they are liable to error in many cases while they are in this world; so that uniformity, in all these things, which some of them may judge very necessary, is not to be expected here; but herein they are all one, they are "every one of this truth,"

yea, even though they may have different ſpeculations about it, and controverſies of words, while the truth itſelf reigns in all their hearts.

This is that unity of the faith wherein all the members of the body of Chriſt, even the babes not very ſkilful in the word of righteouſneſs, are every one according to their meaſure, growing up "unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the "fulneſs of Chriſt," Eph. iv.

Thus they are united by Chriſt's word, according to his prayer to the Father, that they "may be one," John xvii. 20. 21. "Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo "which ſhall believe on me through their word: that they "all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; "that they alſo may be one in us: that the world may be-"lieve that thou haſt ſent me." They are more cloſely joined together in this truth, than they can be by any other means whatſoever; and it is of more force to unite them than any thing can be to divide them; ſo that it is impoſſible for any difference to break this union. Here is Chriſt their peace, on whom all their iniquities met, Iſ. liii. 6.; and his righteouſneſs, which is unto them all, and upon them all without difference, and is the foundation of one and the ſame hope unto them all, Rom. iii. 22. Gal. iv. 5. 7. and v. 5.; his blood, his croſs, whereby the enmity is ſlain, and they all reconciled to God in one body. By this truth they are all made to drink into one Spirit, which they receive through the hearing of faith, and are all related to God as their father, and to Chriſt as their brother-ranſomer, their one Lord Redeemer. And in being of this truth, they are all united to Chriſt by it, as fellow-members of that one and ſame body whereof he is the head; and though the members be many ways differenced, yet there is but one body, wherein all the members are growing up in this unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God. Ought they not therefore to endeavour to "keep the unity of ſpirit in this bond of peace, for-"bearing one another in love," as to other differences? Should any party of them riſe up to oblige all others to uniformity with them in matters of difference, and ſo to eſtabliſh another bond of peace, to the dividing of the body of Chriſt, which yet muſt remain united in this bond in ſpite of all differences? Or dare we exclude from the privileges of Chriſt's kingdom, and reject from our church-communion, the leaſt of them that are of this truth, becauſe they follow not with us in our uniformity; and this after the only Lord

of

of the church has said, "Every one that is of the truth, "heareth my voice?"

SECT. III.

THE hearing of Christ's voice, and being his subject, are the same thing; but we shall inquire a little more particularly concerning this his voice, which his subjects hear; and then concerning their hearing it.

As to the first of these; we may find the short sum of our Lord's voice to his people, in his commission to the gospel-ministry: Mark xvi. 15. 16. "And he said unto them, Go "ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every "creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be sa-"ved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Matth. xxviii. 18. 19. 20. "And Jesus came, and spake unto them, "saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; "go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I "have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even "unto the end of the world. Amen."

And, 1. Christ's subjects hear his voice, preaching "peace "through his cross to them that were afar off, and to them "that were nigh," Eph. ii. 17. "even the word of reconci-"liation," 2 Cor. v. 18.—21.

This preaching of the gospel to every creature, this proclamation of peace, supposes a controversy between God and them to whom it is sent, and that they are thereby in a perishing condition, from which they are uncapable to recover themselves: "For the Son of man came to seek and to save "that which was lost," and he "came not to call the righ-"teous, but sinners to repentance." Wherefore, that sinners may hearken to this word of salvation, they must know that "they have destroyed themselves:" And because they do not easily entertain such a thought of themselves, and so slight the glad news of salvation, they are awakened to hear them by the voice of the law, and its work upon their consciences; the Lord Christ, by his Spirit, making the law subservient to the gospel, by this means, shutting up sinners to the faith, and stopping their mouths, that they may be subject to the judgment of God, and so hearken to the glad tidings of salvation, Rom. iii. 19. & vii. 9. Gal. ii. 19. But when the law hath done its work upon the sinner, he will not

not for all this hearken to the news of ſalvation, but deſpair, if he be not caſt into the mould of the goſpel-doctrine; for it is only they "that are of the truth, that have an ear to "hear Chriſt's voice;" and of the hearing of this voice, we have ſpoken already.

2. His ſubjects hear his voice in his commandments: "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have "commanded you."

He ſpeaks to his people in all his inſtitutions; all the ordinances of the goſpel are his voice. He hath appointed the goſpel miniſtry, firſt extraordinary, for the firſt erection of the church, the firſt joining together of the ſaints in the body of Chriſt, which miniſtry is now ceaſed; and then ordinary, for the edifying of this body of Chriſt, by adding the elect unto it, and building them up in it in all ages unto the end of the world, Eph. iv. 11. 12. 13. He hath commanded them to preach and teach, and to baptize the diſciples, and their infants, (who are to be reckoned by us in the ſame ſtate with them), with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, Matth. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 38. 39. 1 Cor. vii. 14. Mark x. 13. 14. He hath inſtituted the great ordinance of his ſupper, to be obſerved in the churches, or worſhipping congregations of the ſaints, who are one bread and one body in the communion of that bread which they break, and that cup which they bleſs, which is the communion of the body and blood of Chriſt; even as that bread and cup is his body and blood, 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20. 23.—26. 1 Cor. x. 15.—18. A goſpel-church is his inſtitution, with its officers, elders, or biſhops, and deacons, Phil. i. 1. and its diſcipline, Matth. xviii. 15.—20. 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. 5.—8. And in ſuch a church, his diſciples, made ſo by the influence of the word, are to continue "ſtedfaſtly in the go-"ſpel doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, "and in prayers, and in praiſing God, glorifying the Father "of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with one mind, in one mouth," Acts ii. 41. 42. 47. Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7. "Not forſaking the "aſſembling of themſelves together, but conſidering one an-"other to provoke unto love and good works, and exhort-"ing one another," Heb. x. 23. 24. 25. And this is the moſt eminent mean of our worſhipping in the heavenly ſanctuary, while we are here upon the earth, Heb. x. 19.—25. He hath alſo changed the ſabbath from the ſeventh to the firſt day of the Jewiſh week, when he finiſhed his work, and entered into his reſt in the new creation, even as God reſted from all his

his works in the first creation; so that this day remains as the sabbath of the people of God, Col. ii. 16. Heb. iv. 3. 8. 9. 10. Acts xx. 7. Rev. i. 10.

Christ speaks to his people in the moral law, which he hath explained and delivered to his people, as their Lord Redeemer, and which "he writes on their hearts." The least of his commandments must be great and precious, as they are his, unto his people: and "he that breaks the least of them, "and teacheth men so, is least in the kingdom of heaven;" his people must be taught "to observe all things whatsoever "he commands them." But there are some things much insisted on, and vehemently pressed upon his people, in the New Testament, which were not so clearly revealed, nor so much inculcated before, and which are especially suited to the New-Testament revelation: as, for instance, the "command to "deny ourselves, and take our cross, and follow Christ," Matth. xvi. 24. 25.; the command "to love our enemies, to "bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, "and to pray for them which despitefully use us and perse-"cute us," Matth. v. 44. Luke ix. 51.—56.; and the command "to call on the name of the Lord Jesus, and to ask of "the Father in his name," John xvi. 24. Rom. x. 13. 14.; and "to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, "through the vail, that is to say, his flesh," Heb. x. 19. 20. 22.

But we have a commandment in the New Testament, whereby the sincerity of all our obedience is to be tried, and whereby distinction is especially made betwixt Christ's subjects and the seed of the serpent, or the children of the devil; and we have this commandment, 1 John iii. 23. "And this "is his commandment, that we should believe on the name "of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave "us commandment." Christ gave this commandment of charity or brotherly love to his disciples, when about to leave them, John xiii. 34. 35. "A new commandment I give un-"to you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, "that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know "that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This love is plainly distinct from that love which, by the law of nature, we are bound to have to all men, and which is also injoined us by Jesus Christ: for after the entrance of sin, the Lord laid the foundation of this brotherly love among the woman's seed, in that intimation of his design to put enmity betwixt

betwixt the two ſeeds, and our Lord commands his diſciples to love one another, " even as he has loved them." This love is alſo diſtinct from that peculiar love that God's peculiar people, the members of the commonwealth of Iſrael after the fleſh, were bound to have toward one another as brethren by the law, as it was delivered to them: for this is a peculiar love among the diſciples, Jews or Gentiles, wherewith they love one another, " even as he hath loved them."

Our Lord calls this his *new commandment*. And it may be called new on theſe accounts: (1.) Becauſe the love here required has a new object: " Every one that is of the truth." Every one of the redeemed unto God by the blood of the Lamb, out of every nation, is to be loved with this love, wherewith Chriſt would have his people to love one another, even as he hath loved them. He hath ſlain the enmity betwixt theſe two, Jew and Gentile, and hath taken them down, and made them up again into one new man in himſelf. This one new man is the adequate object of this love, and ſo it is new, Eph. ii. 14. 15. 16. (2.) Becauſe there is a new reaſon for it: " Even as I have loved you." 1 John iii. 16. " Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down " his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the " brethren." 1 John iv. 9. 10. 11. " And this is his com- " mandment to whom the Father hath given authority to ex- " ecute judgment, becauſe he is the Son of man," John v. 27. As it was ſaid to the children of Iſrael, " I am the Lord " thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; " thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf;" ſo here he ſays, " A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one " another, as I have loved you." (3.) Becauſe obedience to this commandment is a ſpecial fruit of the New Teſtament Spirit, the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt conforming us to him in his love to his people: " Therefore," ſays he, " as I have lo- " ved you, that ye alſo love one another." And John xv. 12. 13. " This is my commandment, That ye love one an- " other, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man " than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is pointed out as the ſpecial fruit we bring forth, by " abiding in him, as the branch in the vine," ℣ 4. 5. 8. 10. (4.) Becauſe it is the trying command of the New Teſtament, whereby the Lord puts a difference betwixt his ſubjects and the reſt of the world: for by means of this he makes " it " manifeſt in their own conſciences by his Spirit, that they " are his," 1 John iii. 18.—24. And by this he would have his

his disciples manifest in the world; therefore he prays to the Father, "that they may be one, that the world may believe "that the Father hath sent him," John xvii. 21. And by this he will distinguish his people from the world, "when he "executes judgment at his coming." Matth. xxv. 31.—46. "And then the world shall know, that the Father hath loved "them as he has loved him," John xvii. 23. So he says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye "have love one to another."

With respect to this law, putting the difference betwixt the children of God and the children of the devil, believers are called "righteous:" 1 John iii. 7. "Little children, let no "man deceive you: he that doth righteousness, is righteous, "even as he is righteous." Jesus Christ is righteous, in the perfect obedience he gave unto the law of eternal life and death, in the room and stead of his people; and this is the righteousness whereby they are justified, and stand for ever as children, in the Father's favour and love, with Jesus Christ his Son, who kept his commandments, and continues in his love. And he "that doth righteousness," is said "to be righteous, "even as he is righteous." Righteousness must respect a law, against which if a man sin, he cannot properly be called righteous with respect to that law; and here believers are called righteous with reference unto a law against which they do not sin, ℣ 4. 5 6. "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also "the law; for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye "know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and "in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not; "whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him." The law with respect to which believers are righteous in doing righteousness, cannot be that with respect to which Christ is perfectly righteous, and they in him their head. For though there be none that give any true obedience to the commands of that law but they, yet they sin against them daily; and so they are not righteous with respect to that law, in their doing the righteousness of it. But the Apostle plainly points here to the Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, as the Lord himself doth, when he says, John xv. 10. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; "even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and a-"bide in his love." See ℣ 11.—14. 17. "These things I "command you, that ye love one another." For the Apostle tells us, 1 John iii. 8. 9. 10. 11. "He that committeth sin, "is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

" For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he " might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born " of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in " him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In " this the children of God are manifest, and the children of " the devil: Whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God, " neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the mes- " sage that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love " one another." It is plainly the enmity and hatred of the devil and his children, against the woman's seed, that is here called *sin*, as it is also John viii. 34. 37. 38. 44. And it is love to the woman's seed, love to our brethren in Christ for his sake, that is here called *righteousness*. But it cannot be the perfection of this love which is in Jesus Christ the righteous, nor such measures of it as are to be found with some eminent saints only, that is here intended: for some of the children of God have it not in this respect. But the Apostle here speaks of a law, against which " none that are born of " God can sin, because the seed of God remains in them." And that is the law requiring that we have this love one to another, to difference us from the children of the devil, that have not this love at all, nor can have it, because they are not born of God, but hate and persecute God's children. None of the children of God sin against this law; for " they " have purified their souls in obeying the truth, through the " Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren; being born a- " gain of the incorruptible seed of the word, which remain- " eth in them:" So that they cannot be destitute of this love altogether, as the children of the devil are, nor hate the brethren as they do, and so cannot sin against this differencing law, ℣ 12.—15. " Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, " and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Be- " cause his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. " Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We " know that we have passed from death unto life, because we " love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth " in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; " and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding " in him."

The more we do of this righteousness, the more full evidence we have of our being the children of God, and enjoy the more of those manifestations of his love that are promised to them that keep his commandments, John xiv. and xv. And because there is so little of the labour of this love which

is the fruit of faith, yea so little access to perform the duties of this love in a constant way, through the neglect of Christ's great institution for that end, Matth. xviii. 15.—20. Acts ii. 41. 42. therefore those manifestations are so little known, as they were at the beginning, when faith and this love was lively, and when it could be said of believers in the churches, whose faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, might be heard of, "After that ye believed, ye were "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the ear-"nest of our inheritance," Eph. i. 13. 14. 15.

3. Christ's subjects hear his voice in his threatenings: "He "that believeth not, shall be damned." See further these instances of gospel-threatenings, Matth. vii. 21.—27. Luke xiii. 24.—27. Matth. xxv. Matth. xviii. 6. 17. 18. 32.—35. John xv. 2. Heb. ii. 1. 2. 3. and vi. 3.—8. and x. 23.—31. 38. and xii. 25. 28. 29. 2 Pet. ii. 20. 21. and the threatenings to the churches, Rev. ii. and iii.

His threatenings are his voice as well as his promises. And if his subjects be not they that hear this voice of his, who are they then that give it a suitable hearing? This voice of Christ is very useful to his people, to keep them from carnal security and self-confidence, and to move them to hold fast the grace of his kingdom, "whereby they may serve God ac-"ceptably, with reverence and godly fear." For even their "God is a consuming fire." It is far from being an evidence of unbelief or self-righteousness, to be poor, and of a contrite spirit, and to tremble at God's word. And they that hearken not to the voice of Christ's threatenings, while sin and self remain in them, will very soon give little ear to the word of his grace, and be little under the influence of it. Paul knew as much of free-grace, and of the everlasting righteousness brought in by Christ, as any in our day; and he did not think that he was doing any thing inconsistent with it, when he kept "under his body, and was bringing it into subjection, "lest that by any means, when he had preached to others, "he himself should be a cast-away," 1 Cor ix. 24.—27.

4. Christ's subjects hear his voice in his promises: "He "that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." See Rom. x. 8.—13. John vi. 37. 1 John v. 11. 12. 13.

This is the great promise of the gospel, wherein all that is promised is the reward of Christ's righteousness, the only foundation of our title to all the promises: and then only can we have solid hopes of enjoying the good things promised, when we look upon them as the reward of his righteousness;

yet so as we must always attend to this tenor of the promises, " teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have " commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the " end of the world. And if ye keep my commandments, ye " shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's " commandments, and abide in his love."

The gospel contains " the promises of this life, and of that " which is to come;" and godliness has these promises. See the tenor, first, of the promises of this life: " Take no " thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we " drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye " first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all " these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no " thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought " for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil " thereof," Matth vi. 31.—34. Unto this promise the Apostle seems to refer, when he says, That " godliness has " the promise of the life that now is." See 1 Tim. iv. 7.—10. We have also something like a promise of this life in our Lord's saying, " That there is no man that hath left " house and lands —— for his sake and the gospel's, but he " shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time houses, and " lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eter- " nal life," Mark x. 28. 29. 30. But there are other sorts of promises made out unto Christ's subjects in this world; such as, the promise of Christ's being always present with his ministers in teaching, and with his people in observing all things that he commands; and that promise, John xiv. 23. and the promises to the churches. See the promise to Philadelphia, Rev iii. 10. " Because thou hast kept the word of " my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temp- " tation." We must next consider the tenor of the promise of the life that is to come, which is the main promise of the gospel, the earthly inheritance being now done away, and the promise of Christ's coming in the flesh being now fulfilled. See Rev. iii. 21. " To him that overcometh will I " grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, " and am set down with my Father in his throne." John xii. 25. 26. Rom. viii. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 8 " Be stedfast, unmove- " able, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord." Col. iii. 23. 24. " And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as " unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the " Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for

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" ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt." Rev. xxii. 14. Our Lord ſays, Matth. vii. " He that heareth my ſayings, and doth them, is " like unto a man which built his houſe on a rock; and when " the ſtorm came, it fell not, becauſe it was founded on a " rock." His people cannot periſh in the judgment, but will be eternally ſaved, becauſe founded on him, the only rock of ſalvation. But every one founded there keeps his ſayings; and ſo their title to the promiſed ſalvation is manifeſt. He repreſents himſelf, Matth. xxv. ſpeaking thus to his people in the judgment: " Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the " kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the " world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirſty, " and ye gave me drink," *&c.* The kingdom was ſure to them by an eternal purpoſe of free grace in Chriſt. But their keeping of Chriſt's ſayings manifeſts their intereſt in this grace; and ſo the promiſes run in this tenor.

Grace and duty harmoniſe pleaſantly in the word; but ſince they have been ſet at odds by the ſubtilty of Satan, and the corruptions of men, the glory of both, which appears brighteſt in their due connection, has been very much darkened; and both contending parties ſeem to have loſt, each of them, a conſiderable part of the word, with the benefit of it, in the contention. If I durſt preſume to offer a text to the conſideration of both parties, that might be of great uſe to them, it ſhould be that word, Jam. ii. 22. " Seeſt thou how faith " wrought with his works, and by works was faith made " perfect?" They that have a zeal for works, and magnify them, as it were, upon the diſparagement of grace, and Chriſt's righteouſneſs revealed in the truth of the goſpel, and ſo give out that truth with great caution, as if they were afraid of it, and that will not let themſelves or others ſee much in the goſpel, but commands, and promiſes to the keeping of theſe commands, had need to underſtand and ſee how faith wrought with Abraham's works, when he offered up his ſon, and to endeavour to make it manifeſt to others, when they preſs any duty. Now, the faith that wrought with Abraham's works was this, " God will provide himſelf a lamb " for a burnt-offering," Gen. xxii. 8. And if they would " teſtify in the Lord," Eph. iv. 17. and exhort us " by the " Lord Jeſus," 1 Theſſ. iv. 1. 2. and beſeech us " by the " mercies of God," Rom. xii. 1. " and knowing the terror " of the Lord, perſuade us," 2 Cor. v. 11. when they tell us " how we ought to walk and pleaſe God," no man could juſtly find fault with them. On the other hand, they that

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ſhew a great zeal for grace, and love only to hear or preach of abſolute promiſes, and to preſs our aſſurance of abſolute promiſes in believing the goſpel, and that give out the commandments of the Lord Jeſus, and promiſes made to the keeping of them, with great caution, as if they were afraid of them, would be nothing the worſe, though they ſaw and conſidered well, and did their beſt to let others ſee, "how by "works faith is made perfect:" for by works Abraham's faith was thus confirmed, and, in ſome meaſure, reached its end. "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and "behold, a ram caught in a thicket. —— And Abraham "called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh. —— And the "angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven "the ſecond time, and ſaid, By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith "the Lord, for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt "not with-held thy ſon, thine only ſon, that in bleſſing I will "bleſs thee," Gen xxii. 13.—17. And when they teſtify the goſpel of the grace of God, they may alſo earneſtly exhort us, to ſhew conſtant diligence in the work and labour of love "unto the full aſſurance of hope unto the end; and "that we be not ſlothful, but followers of them who "through faith and patience inherit the promiſes." For when God made promiſe to Abraham, "becauſe he could ſwear by "no greater, he ſware by himſelf, ſaying, Surely, bleſſing, I "will bleſs thee. —— Wherein God willing more abundantly "to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his "counſel, confirmed it by an oath," Heb. vi 10.—18. And thus by works our faith would be made perfect, and we would learn "to hold faith and a good conſcience; which "ſome putting away, concerning faith make ſhipwreck," 1 Tim. i. 19.

If our preachers would look with both eyes upon both parts of this ſame text, "Seeſt thou how faith wrought "with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" there would not be ſo much encouragement given, on the one hand, to the natural inclination that is in us to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of our own, and ſo much offence to them that "love the truth as it is in Jeſus;" nor, on the other hand, ſo much encouragement to a ſort of profeſſors of the truth, that would take joy from the goſpel, and triumph in their knowledge of the way of righteouſneſs, and in the exerciſe of their gifts, while at the ſame time they ſlight the commandments of Jeſus Chriſt, walk after the fleſh, and exerciſe not "themſelves to keep conſciences void of offence to-

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" ward God and toward men;" and will " not take up " their croſs, and follow Chriſt."

Preachers of natural religion, with the wiſdom of words, will be magnified by the Sadducees; and preachers of a zeal of God, but not according to the knowledge of the righteouſneſs of God revealed in the goſpel, will be magnified by the Phariſees; and preachers of grace, or of faith, without works, the fruits of it, and without exhorting and warning every one how he ought to walk, and to pleaſe God, will be delightful to them that boaſt in " faith without works;" and they that ſhun not to " declare the whole counſel of God," will pleaſe no party of this world; yet " they are unto God " a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in " them that periſh; and every one that is of the truth, will " hear Chriſt's voice."

But we muſt proceed now to conſider what it is to " hear " Chriſt's voice." And, 1. To hear Chriſt's voice is to diſcern it. Chriſt's ſubjects that are of the truth, and ſo have an ear to hear Chriſt's voice, have another ſort of diſcerning of his voice than other men are capable of. " The natural " man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe " they are ſpiritually diſcerned." He takes up all that Chriſt ſays, in a natural way, accommodates it all to his natural way of thinking; and ſo far as he imagines it to be according to that, ſo far he underſtands it, and no further: but if he apprehend that there is any thing more in it, he underſtands it not, " it is fooliſhneſs to him," becauſe it is not according to his wiſdom; and ſo he diſcerns not the voice of Chriſt at all. For the things that Chriſt ſays, are the things of God's deep wiſdom, which man knew not; and which the Spirit, that ſearcheth all things, reveals not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but in words fitted by him to expreſs ſpiritual things.

The natural man goes about to judge this by his wiſdom; for he has no other way of judging; but he that is ſpiritual, or he that is of the truth, and ſo has an ear to hear Chriſt's voice, " judgeth all the things that Chriſt ſays; he knows his " voice," underſtands his meaning, having heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in him; he has faith, the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things hoped for; the eyes of his underſtanding are enlightened, " to know " what is the hope of God's calling, and what is the riches of " the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints; and he is tranſ- " formed by the renewing of his mind, that he may prove " what

" what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of " God;" and he " knows the terror of the Lord;" so he judges all the things that Christ says. Yet herein he is not subject to man's judgment: for he judgeth of things above all man's wisdom: " For who hath known the mind of the " Lord, that he may instruct him? But," says the Apostle, " we have the mind of Christ," 1 Cor. ii. See ℣ 13.—16.

They that are of the truth, and " have tasted that the Lord " is gracious, do as new-born babes desire the sincere milk " of the word," and they suck in that sincere milk, " that " they may grow thereby," 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2. 3. But others seek the word, and a meaning of it, to answer this and the other corrupt end and design; and they delight in it, as they conceive it suited unto that end: so, if they grow by it, they grow monsters in religion. They taste not that sincere milk to grow up thereby unto eternal life; they take the word only as it makes for their purpose. And this is the way in all the perverse disputings of them that use the word to serve their party-designs, and their pride, envy, and malice against one another: they rejoice in the word, as it seems to hit their adversary, and as they conceive it makes for their party: but the sincere milk of the word they know not, they love not. However Christ's subjects may be for a time, or in some things, carried out this way, yet this is no mark of his subjects.

They that are of the truth, distinguish Christ's voice: " His " sheep follow him; for they know his voice: and a stran- " ger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of " strangers," John x. 4. 5. They can distinguish his voice from enthusiastic imaginations, and the language of a false spirit, from the language of nature and man's wisdom, and from the doctrines and commandments of men: for though there may be superstition in them, and though they may be inslaved in many things to men, and afraid to doubt that their doctrines and commandments are the word of Christ; yet they do not see that glory in man's words that they see in those words of Christ which they discern: " For what is " the chaff to the wheat?" Christ's people may be keeping, in notion, and some way in practice, the word of man, and yet have some discerning of, and inclination to observe the word of Christ, directly contrary to what they are keeping of the word of man; though they do not see the inconsistency; and so are driven into great difficulties about keeping the word of Christ and man's word together.

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2. Christ's people hear his voice; their consciences are subject to it, they receive it, and embrace it, on account of his authority, as the rule of their faith and obedience, of their fears and hopes.

They hear his voice as it is the voice of their Lord Redeemer. They have a sense of his authority in his voice, and their minds and wills are subjected to it. It is enough to them that he says so, without asking any further questions about it; and thus they hear his voice of whom the Father hath said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well "pleased; hear ye him" Christ hath not subjected the consciences of his subjects to any other authority besides his own; yea, he has discharged his disciples "to call any man "master." He would not have any of his disciples called "Rabbi; because one is their master, even Christ, and all "they are brethren," Matth. xxiii. 8.—12. His ministers, that bring his word to his people, "are not to preach themselves their lords, but Christ Jesus their Lord, and themselves their servants," in representing the authority of Christ in his word unto them. They have no authority of their own over the consciences of the disciples; and however the disciples may be in many things inslaved even by them, yet Christ hath made them free. And this their slavery is no evidence of their subjection to Jesus Christ: for their subjection to him, evidences itself in a respect to his authority in his word, in opposition to all that stands in competition with it; and though his mind should be many ways mistaken by his subjects, yet a regard to his authority, in holding what they take to be his mind, in opposition to the authority of man, is a better evidence of their hearing his voice, than the observing the things that he says, on the account of no other authority but that of man.

Some seem to receive Christ's word on the account of the reasonableness of what they think he says; and so it is not his voice they hear, but the voice of their own reason. Some receive what he says, because of impressions made upon them, as they take it, by his Spirit; and they take no further heed to what he says in his word, than as they find it impressed upon them: thus they hear not his voice in the scripture-revelation, but the voice of these impressions; and they take not the whole word of Christ as it is his, but the word as they find it impressed, for their rule. Yet the Spirit of Christ is the same Spirit that indited the scriptures; and he that is born of God, heareth the scriptures, and Christ's voice in them; and

when the Holy Ghoſt leads us into all truth, "he brings "all things to our remembrance, whatſoever Chriſt hath ſaid "unto us; and he ſpeaks not of himſelf, but glorifies Chriſt:" ſo that they that are under his influence are ſubjected to the authority of Chriſt in his word, and receive his word as it is his. Some again receive the things that Chriſt ſays, on account of the authority of man; and many hear not the voice of Chriſt, but the voice of prevailing cuſtom, and the traditions of their fathers; and the voice of the world, the voice of the generality of the wiſe and learned, or the voice of the godly, goes farther with the moſt part than the voice of Jeſus Chriſt in his word: for where they find Chriſt ſaying any thing in his word, and none ſaying with him, they cannot hear him. So far as his diſciples give way to theſe things, ſo far their ſubjection to him appears not.

They that are ſubject to Chriſt's authority in his word, and entertain his voice, as the rule of their faith and obedience, fears and hopes, ſhew a regard to all that he ſays, all that he teſtifies, commands, promiſes, or threatens. The leaſt thing he ſays has weight with them; and what he is moſt in ſaying, they are moſt in hearing. They regard all his commandments; and are not as the Phariſees, exceedingly zealous in the leaſt things, which they ought alſo to do, and paſſing over "the weightier "matters of the law." They do not cut and carve upon the words and commandments of Jeſus Chriſt, to ſhun what may endamage their worldly intereſt, and to receive only what they may keep without difficulty and hazard, and what they blindly judge abſolutely neceſſary unto their ſalvation, or perhaps what they find abſolutely neceſſary to maintain their credit among the party of Chriſtians that they have to do with.

Chriſt's ſubjects "delight in the law" of their "Lord after "the inward man," and ſo they hear his voice without conſtraint; but there is "another law in their members" continually "warring againſt the law of their minds;" ſo that it is no wonder if this their hearing of Chriſt's voice be very much marred: yet ſo far as they are of the truth, he is unto them the only Lord of their faith, of their conſcience, of ſin and duty, of their fear and of their hope. Thus "every one "that is of the truth hears his voice."

3. Chriſt's ſubjects keep his ſayings, and do the things that he ſays; and ſo they hear his voice. They believe his teſtimony, they tremble at his word of threatening, they hope in his word of promiſe, and they obſerve and do what he commands.

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He is highly offended with them that call him "Lord, and "do not the things that he ſays." Luke vi. 46. "Why "call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I "ſay?" Men may be ſo far under the influence of his Spirit, as to be thereby enabled to call him "Lord," 1 Cor. xii. 3. and ſo be joined with his people in the profeſſion; and yet not do the things that he ſays: therefore they are called "branches in him, not bearing fruit," John xv. 2. Theſe may be, as far as man's eye ſees, doing what he ſays, and ſo be accounted his ſubjects: yet they are not doing the very things he ſays, but the appearance of them: They do not obey him in that faith which worketh by love, and which is the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things hoped for; and ſo, not having root in themſelves, they wither, and bring forth no fruit to perfection. But every one that is of the truth, in the leaſt meaſure, does, according to that meaſure, obey the commandments of Jeſus Chriſt.

His ſubjects are not yet wholly of the truth. There remains a corrupt principle of unbelief and enmity in their ſouls, while they are in this world, from which the truth in them meets with continual oppoſition, as it does alſo from the temptations of Satan and of the world; "ſo that when they "would do good, evil is preſent with them; and they can-"not do the things that they would; yea, the evil that they "would not, that they do," Rom. vii. 19.—24. Gal. v. 17. Therefore all that obedience is very much to be ſuſpected, that meets with no oppoſition from within a man's ſelf; and it is no wonder to ſee a Phariſee going on without difficulty, and very ſmoothly, in his obedience of the letter, while they that are of the truth, and according to their meaſure hearing Chriſt's voice, find the greateſt reaſon in themſelves to cry out, "O wretched man!" and, through the power of temptation, and of the fleſh, fall many times, even in the courſe of their external obedience; which is the reaſon for Chriſt's inſtitution of diſcipline in the churches of the ſaints, for the honour of his name, and of his truth in the world: "And "the righteous falleth ſeven times, and riſeth up again; but "the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief." Yet the Phariſee is walking only after the fleſh; he has not the Spirit of Jeſus, nor the truth, to make head againſt it; and he is alive without the law; therefore he goes on ſmoothly in his carnal ſelfiſh obedience: but they that are of the truth, notwithſtanding of all their eſcapes and ſtumblings, are the only perſons in the world that move a ſtep in the way of Chriſt's

commandments. They only are hearty in this obedience, and ſpiritual, doing the very truth of the things that Chriſt requires; they only do the things that he ſays, becauſe he ſays them, and are honeſtly aiming at the glory of his name in the doing of them, and at perfection, in obedience to all his commandments without exception; none but they are truly "denying themſelves, taking up their croſs, and following "Chriſt;" and they only ſin not againſt that law whereby the children of God and the children of the devil are manifeſt.

It is much to be lamented, that, even among them that have more than the common profeſſion of Chriſtian religion, and that have learned ſome way to call Chriſt Lord, there appears at this day ſo little doing of the things that Chriſt ſays, ſo much conformity to a preſent world, and ſo little conformity to Jeſus Chriſt, ſo little ſelf-denial, and patient bearing the croſs after him, ſo little good-will and forgiveneſs to enemies, and ſo very little brotherly love, and charity, and mercy to the poor: and theſe are ſad evidences that the truth, as it is in Chriſt, has either very little poſſeſſion in our hearts, or that it is not in us, and that we receive not the love of it. Though there be many that renounce the groſs profaneneſs of the publicans and harlots, and the looſe principles of the Sadducees, and have learned "to pray long, and "even to faſt," and that have a fair ſhew of giving alms, ſo as to maintain their credit; yet the truth of Chriſt's doctrine, about the impoſſibility of ſerving God and Mammon, laying up for ourſelves "treaſures in heaven, and not on earth, that "our hearts may be where our treaſure is," and about ſeeking "firſt the kingdom of God, and taking no thought for "to-morrow," and about "giving to the poor," Matth. vi. Luke xvi. is fully as ridiculous to them unto this day, as it was at firſt to the Phariſees: Luke xvi. 14. 15. "And "the Phariſees alſo, who were covetous, heard all theſe "things, and they derided him. And he ſaid unto them, "Ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before men; but God "knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly eſteemed "amongſt men, is abomination in the ſight of God."

But Chriſt's ſheep hear his voice, and he knows them, and they follow him, and he gives unto them "eternal life, and "they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of "his hand."

SECT.

SECT. IV.

WE come now to consider the connection betwixt being of the truth, and hearing Christ's voice. And this may be some way cleared to us in considering these following things.

1. Christ's title to rule over us, his authority and right to command us, is manifest in this truth concerning his righteousness revealed in the gospel. Therefore, when he appears in the midst of the throne, as head over all things to the church, and takes the book to loose it, and to order and dispose of all things about the church, Rev. v. we find the redeemed brought in acknowledging him worthy "to take "the book, and to open the seals." And why? "For," say they, "thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by "thy blood." The Lord's authority over Israel, and his right to command them, was manifest in his redeeming them from the Egyptian bondage; and much more is his authority and right to govern his people manifest in the eternal redemption he has now wrought for them, which is the subject of this truth of which they are. He is the good shepherd that laid down his life for the sheep, and has taken it again for them; so they are his own, and they hear his voice, and follow him. They that know him in this truth, will be obliged to own, with Thomas, that he is "their Lord, and their "God;" and to reckon, "that they are not their own, but "bought with a price; and therefore bound to glorify him "in their bodies and spirits, which are his." For a man to be of this truth, and yet not subject to, nor acknowledge the authority of Christ the Redeemer, is as great an inconsistency as can be thought of.

2. The things he says are all suitable unto this truth, and all his commandments are according to it: "Therefore they "that are of this truth must hear his voice." This truth is evidently set forth in all the institutions of the gospel, which he commands his people to observe, and in all the New-Testament worship. The preaching of the gospel is the preaching of Christ crucified. Baptism is the washing away of our sins in the blood of Christ, the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and our being buried with him unto death, that like as he was raised up from the dead, we should walk in newness of life; and as many as are baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his

his death. The Lord's ſupper evidently ſets forth his body broken for us, his blood ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins; and the communion of his diſciples in a goſpel-church in partaking together, as one body, of that one bread and cup, is the communion of the body and blood of Jeſus Chriſt; and "therein we ſhew forth his death till he come." The Chriſtian ſabbath is our joyful reſt in that work finiſhed by him who is now entered into his reſt.

What are our prayers, if they be not our calling on the name of the Lord our righteouſneſs, and aſking the Father in his name? And what are our praiſes, if they be not aſcriptions of glory to the Lamb that was ſlain, and thankſgivings unto the Father by him? And what is all the New-Teſtament worſhip, if it be not our drawing near to the Father by one Spirit through him, "who has reconciled us to God in one "body by the croſs," and our coming into the holieſt by his blood, and through the vail of his fleſh? The aſſemblies of his people in the churches, are their gathering together unto him, and in his name, "who is the Lord their righteouſ-"neſs, to ſee the glory and feel the power of his croſs." The government of a goſpel-church is a repreſentation of the authority of the great ſhepherd of the ſheep, that was brought again from the dead, by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, unto his ſheep: for it is the feeding of his ſheep. And the life of the diſcipline is their agreeing to call on the name of the Lord their righteouſneſs, and to aſk in his name, that he may do what they thus do in his name Thus this truth is written upon the inſtitutions of the goſpel. Further, all the obedience that Chriſt requireth of us, is according to this truth; ſo that it is a "walking in the truth," 2 John 4. Chriſt hath ſhewed us in this truth what is good, in anſwer to that perplexing queſtion, "What ſhall I give for the ſin "of my ſoul? and wherewithal ſhall I come before God?" And what he requires of us is very agreeable to that good: He calls us "to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk "humbly with our God," Mic. vi. 6. 7. 8. He becomes our God only in and by this truth; and when he calls us to do juſtly, and love mercy, it is moſt agreeable to the revelation of his mercy and juſtice in this truth: and whereas, in ſhewing us this good, he ſtains the pride of all our glory, and glorifies himſelf exceedingly in our ſalvation by that ſacrifice of his own providing; it is every way agreeable to this, that we "ſhould walk humbly with our God." All our obedience to Chriſt is our conformity unto the image and glory

glory of God, as it is represented unto us in this truth; therefore we find the apostles frequently representing the suitableness of what they require in Christ's name unto this truth. And if we look to the great gospel-commandments of "self-denial," and "bearing the cross, love to enemies, "love to one another, as Christ has loved us," *&c.* we may easily see how they all relate to this truth; and therefore they that are of the truth, must hear his voice in them. The things that he forbids are the iniquities that he suffered for in his death; and that which he requires is, that we should follow him in that wherein he is our righteousness; and his threatenings are all to move us to cleave fast to this truth, and walk suitably to it; and they will be accomplished on them that slight this truth, and them that are not of it.

3. The most excellent motives unto the obedience that Christ requires, are fetched from this truth, and are contained in it. See 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. "For the love of Christ "constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died "for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that "they which live, should not henceforth live to themselves, "but unto him which died for them, and rose again." We see motives brought from this truth to influence us to our duty in the relations wherein we are placed in the world. See, for instance, Eph. v. 25. "Husbands, love your wives, "even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for "it." We may also take notice how strongly the Apostle presses charity, and rich liberality to the poor, by this truth, 2 Cor. viii. 9. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus "Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he be-"came poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." If we speak of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the holiness of God, and his wrath due to sin, as a motive to obedience, it is no where to be seen unto such advantage as in this truth; and if we speak of the hope of acceptance with God, and of a reward to encourage us under all the fears and difficulties that may cast up to us about serving God and obeying him, this is no where to be found in the world but in this truth; and if we speak of the pleasure and delight that is to be found in the way of duty, whence flows all that joy but from this truth? or can they that take not rest in this truth, find "Christ's yoke easy, and his burden light?"

Motives brought from this truth are the most powerful; for the revelation of this truth is the great contrivance of infinite wisdom for bringing sinful men to obedience; and therefore

therefore it must be effectual in all them who are of this truth. And all other motives without this will be of no force to engage us to do the things that Christ says.

4. In this truth is found a deliverance from, and the victory over every thing that stands in the way to hinder their keeping the commandments of Jesus Christ, who are of the truth: 1 John v. 3.—6. "For this is the love of God, that we keep "his commandments: and his commandments are not grie- "vous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the "world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, "even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, "but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This "is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; "not by water only, but by water and blood." In believing this truth, we see a complete victory obtained by Jesus Christ, in his death, over the prince of this world, over all the power of sin, and of the lust of the world, within us, and over all the power of temptation. So that however great and terrible this power of the prince of the world may be to us, and however impossible-like the keeping of the commandments may seem to us thereby; yet, in believing this victory that Christ hath already won, we are partakers with him in it, according to the measure of faith; and so we overcome the power of the world, that stands against the keeping of the commandments of God, and find his "commandments not "grievous." There are many vain pretences unto striving against sin; but "this is the victory over the world, even our "faith:" and who is he that overcometh, but he that believeth? The true fight against sin is the fight of faith. The power of the prince of this world is too strong a party for us to contend with, and all our labour against it is but the washing of the Ethiopian; yea, we are not at all striving against it, but labouring to wreath the yoke faster about our own necks, by all our natural efforts after deliverance. But Jesus Christ, by redeeming us from the curse in his death, hath effectually broken the power of the prince of this world, and cast him out. "For the strength of sin is the curse of the "law;" and he hath effectually done away that in his death. Now, when we find ourselves pressed hard, and ready to be overwhelmed with the power of the world, we overcome in the belief of this truth. For here we see all this power already broken and completely vanquished, and we are partakers of the victory in believing. And further, we find in this truth all the power of God reconciled, and engaged, by the

cross

croſs of Chriſt, for them that believe. And thus faith overcomes the power of the world. This is the good fight of faith. Thus we overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

Our Lord bids them that would bear his yoke and burden, firſt take reſt to their conſciences in him, and then take on his yoke: For it will be inſupportable to them that take not reſt by faith in that redemption which is already wrought by his blood: but unto all them that are of this truth, and find reſt in believing, it will be eaſy and light, and they will find his commandments not grievous: Matth. xi. 28. 29. 30. "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and "I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn "of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye ſhall "find reſt unto your ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my "burden is light."

5. It is by this truth that we are ſanctified, and ſo powerfully inclined and enabled to hear Chriſt's voice: John xvii. 17. 19. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is "truth. And for their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, that they al- "ſo might be ſanctified through the truth." Compare Heb. x. 10. 14. "By the which will we are ſanctified, through the "offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all. —— For "by one offering, he hath for ever perfected them that are "ſanctified." It is the God of peace, God reconciled by the death of Chriſt, that ſanctifies us: 1 Theſſ. v. 23. "And the "very God of peace ſanctify you wholly." And therefore, when the Apoſtle tells us, "that every man that is in Chriſt "is a new creature," he declares, that all the things of this new creation "are of God, who hath reconciled us to him- "ſelf by Jeſus Chriſt; making him to be ſin for us, who "knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of "God in him," 2 Cor. v. 17. 18—21. And when he prays that Chriſt's people may be made perfect in every good work, he prays thus, Heb. xiii. 20. 21. "The God of peace that "brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great "ſhepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting "covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his "will, working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight, "through Jeſus Chriſt."

We receive the ſpirit of ſanctification from the ſlain Lamb, and by the hearing of faith; and that faith whereby we are ſanctified, is "faith in the blood of Jeſus;" that faith whereby we get an inheritance among them that are ſanctified, is the very ſame faith whereby we receive remiſſion of

ſins; the power that ſanctifies us is no other power but the power of the croſs of Chriſt; and the glory to which we are conformed by the Spirit in beholding it, is the glory that ſhines in Chriſt crucified; and we are raiſed up to walk in newneſs of life, no otherwiſe but together with Chriſt, and by the power of his reſurrection, "who was delivered for our "offences, and raiſed for our juſtification," and by that blood of the everlaſting covenant, by virtue of which he came again from the dead: and therefore they ſeek ſanctification where it is not to be found, who ſeek it not in this truth; and they ſeek it in vain, who ſeek it not by that belief of this truth, whereby we receive the remiſſion of ſins, and are juſtified. But every one that is of this truth is ſanctified by it, and ſo inclined to hear Chriſt's voice.

6. In this truth we have ſet before us the moſt powerful and engaging pattern of obedience. There have been many flouriſhing diſcourſes about the example of Chriſt, and about following him as a pattern; and, no doubt, he is every where ſet before us in the goſpel to be imitated, and copied after by us: but we cannot look upon his example unto any advantage, if we do not view it, as it lies in this truth; and if it be ſet up any way unto the diſparagement of this truth, the glory of it is deſtroyed. There are theſe two things that they would do well to advert to in the example of Chriſt, who are in good earneſt to copy after it. 1. They muſt look upon the man Chriſt Jeſus, who was obedient unto the death, as a truly divine perſon, and behold his glory, as the glory of God manifeſt in the fleſh: ſo they will find him an unerring pattern, and have confidence to follow him abſolutely without any fear of idolatry. 2. They muſt look upon his obedience unto the death, as that very righteouſneſs, whereby they are to be juſtified in the ſight of God, and intitled to the inheritance of children; and ſo they will find themſelves under the influence of his redeeming love, and the power of his croſs, to engage them to copy after him, and will find the greateſt encouragement and liberty in following him. It will be no bondage nor ſlaviſh taſk for them to follow him in his obedience to the death, who have this view of it. The Apoſtle Peter ſets it before us in this view, 1 Pet. ii. 21. 24. "For even hereunto were ye called: becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuf- "fered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow "his ſteps:—Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own "body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live un- "to righteouſneſs: by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed."

Thus

Thus Christ's example is set before us in the truth, to which he bears witness; and thus it is powerful to conform us unto itself: "For we all with open face, beholding (in the "gospel) the glory of the Lord Christ, are changed into the "same image, by the Spirit of the Lord;" even that same Spirit that dwells in him, and furnished him in his whole obedience unto the death. He makes us partakers of the grace of the man Christ Jesus; and being thus partakers in his grace, we copy after him in his obedience. For the like grace produces the like obedience. So we, beholding the glory of the Word made flesh, full of grace, do all receive of his fullness, grace, answerable to the grace that is in him; which makes our obedience answerable to his, according to the measure of grace received from him. And we beholding the glory of his obedience and sufferings, "are changed from "glory to glory, by the Spirit of glory" that rested upon him, in his obedience, and through which he offered up himself; and this according to the measure of our beholding his glory.

Christians cannot but acknowledge, there is a beauty and glory in his obedience. But do we see no glory in his sufferings, which accompanied his obedience from first to last? And is there no beauty, no glory, in being conformed to him in his sufferings, and in his being despised and rejected of men, "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," in his poverty and want, his shame and disgrace, and his painful and shameful death, and in his patient enduring the cross, and despising the shame? Is not that suitable language for Christians, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of "our Lord Jesus, by whom the world is crucified to me, "and I to the world. It became him, for whom are all "things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons "unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect "through sufferings?" And it well becomes them who are led to glory by him, to go forth unto him bearing his reproach, and to follow their crucified captain, bearing the cross; which is the good old way of following him, that had a certain issue in eternal glory. And whatever the men of this world may think, it is the greatest glory we are capable of in this world, the greatest privilege we can be admitted to, to be conformed unto Christ in his sufferings. And "every "one that is of the truth," will, according to his measure, breathe after it; and be something of Paul's mind, when he

ſays, " Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things loſs, — that I " may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the " fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto " his death; if, by any means, I might attain unto the re- " ſurrection of the dead."

" Now unto him that died and roſe again, that he might " be Lord both of the dead and of the living; to that living " one that became dead, and is alive for evermore, and has " the keys of hell and death, be everlaſting glory and do- " minion." *Amen.*

QUERIES

QUERIES put to Mr Glas, by the ſynod of Angus and Mearns, with his ANSWERS, in April 1728.

Query 1. IS it your opinion, That the Chriſtian magiſtrate has no more power concerning church-matters than a private believer? or not?

Anſwer. If the church be of this world, or if it be national, and eſtabliſhed by the laws of the kingdoms of this world with civil ſanctions, and if it have juriſdiction over the magiſtrate's ſubjects in their civil rights, then the magiſtrate's power muſt be in and about the matters of ſuch a church; but in the kingdom of heaven, or in the church of Chriſt, which is not of this world, the magiſtrate's power, whether he be Chriſtian or not, has no place.

Quer. 2. Is it your opinion, That earthly power, or power of the magiſtrate, ought not at all to be employed for advancing the kingdom of Chriſt? or not?

Anſ. The kingdom of Chriſt, which is not of this world, cannot be advanced by earthly power, or the power of the magiſtrate, any otherwiſe than as all things are working together for the advancement of it.

Quer. 3. Is it your opinion, That it is unlawful to enact laws, with penalties, in favour of religion? or to defend the true religion by arms? or not?

Anſ. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath not annexed civil ſanctions to his laws, and the true religion cannot be defended by arms, as may the natural and civil rights and liberties of mankind: it muſt be defended another way, Eph. vi. 11. 12. 13. 2 Cor. x. 4.

Quer. 4. Is it your opinion, That no argument can be drawn for the Chriſtian magiſtrate's acting for the reformation of religion, and ſuppreſſing of falſe worſhip, from the examples of magiſtrates under the Old Teſtament? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, till I ſee otherwiſe.

Quer. 5. Is it your opinion, That the kingly office of the kings of Judah and Iſrael was an eccleſiaſtical office? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the kingly office of David, and the kings that ſat upon his throne, was eccleſiaſtical.

Quer. 6. Is it your opinion, That the magiſtrate ought not to give civil encouragement to good Chriſtians, living in his dominions, more than any other good ſubjects? or not?

Anſ.

Anſ. Civil encouragement given by the magiſtrate reſpects his good ſubjects as ſuch.

Quer. 7. Is it your opinion, That the countenance of civil authority to the church is a hindrance to religion or reformation? or not?

Anſ. It is not my opinion; but I have thought, that the encouragement given by Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors to the clergy, however they deſigned it, ſerved to raiſe Antichriſt to his throne.

Quer. 8. Is it your opinion, That the magiſtrate ought to give liberty to heretics, and all falſe teachers, to perform their worſhip, and ſpread their opinions, and hinder none of them, if they carry otherwiſe as good ſubjects? or not?

Anſ. The magiſtrate can puniſh none that carry as good ſubjects.

Quer. 9. Is it your opinion, That the church of Iſrael was but a typical church; and God's covenant with them was but typical and temporary, promiſing nothing but earthly bleſſings, and a carnal inheritance? or not?

Anſ. That church which conſiſted of all Iſrael according to the fleſh, was a type of that church which conſiſts of all the Iſrael according the ſpirit; and that typical church enjoyed only earthly bleſſings, and an earthly inheritance, by virtue of the covenant at Sinai, which could not give them ſpiritual bleſſings, and the heavenly inheritance, any other way than as it was ſubſervient unto the better covenant eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, by which all true believers among them obtained eternal bleſſedneſs.

Quer. 10. Is it your opinion, That the old Sinai covenant made with the church, was but a type, figure, or ſhadow of the new covenant that God was to make with his New-Teſtament church? or not?

Anſ. The nation taken into covenant with God at Sinai, was a type of the heavenly nation related unto him in the new covenant; the redemption of that people out of Egypt, was a type of the eternal redemption of all the people of God by Jeſus Chriſt; Moſes, the mediator of that old covenant, was a type of Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator of the new covenant; the inheritance belonging to that covenant or teſtament, was a type of the inheritance in the New Teſtament; the blood wherewith that old covenant or teſtament was dedicated, was a type of the blood of Chriſt ſealing the new covenant; and that old covenant, which is made old, Heb. viii. and is caſt out, with the people covenanted, Gal. iv. even that firſt teſtament

ſtament dedicated with the blood of beaſts, was a type or pattern of the new covenant or teſtament in the blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Heb. ix. 15.—23.

Quer. 11. Is it your opinion, That the commands or precedents under the old teſtament, for national covenanting, were not moral, but typical, earthly, and Jewiſh, and ought not to be imitated by any Chriſtian nation? or not?

Anſ. I know no nation truly Chriſtian, but the holy nation, the kingdom of Chriſt; which is not of this world, and is gathered out of all nations: this is the only nation bringing forth the fruits of the kingdom of God, and with this nation there is an everlaſting covenant.

Quer. 12. Is it your opinion, That it was unwarrantable for our anceſtors to carry on reformation by national covenanting? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the covenants commonly called the *national covenant*, and the *ſolemn league and covenant*, were without warrant in God's word; and that all the true reformation that has been in theſe lands, was carried on by the word and ſpirit of the Lord Jeſus, by the New Teſtament.

Quer. 13. Is it your opinion, That thoſe who ſuffered in the late times, for adhering to ſuch national covenant engagements, were in ſo far unenlightened? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion; while, at the ſame time, I highly honour and value them, and the light they had, and their ſufferings for Chriſt.

Quer. 14. Is it your opinion, That theſe covenant-engagements have a tendency to lead men off from that foundation that God hath laid in Zion? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the founding of church-communion, upon that extenſive uniformity, which is the great ſcope of the covenants, national and ſolemn league, had a tendency to lead off men from Chriſt, the foundation that God has laid in Zion, and the corner-ſtone, in whom all the building of God is fitly framed together; and I judge it to be the duty of all his people, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to forbear one another in love, in their differences, about ſeveral parts of the foreſaid uniformity.

Quer. 15. Is it your opinion, That there is no warrant for a national church under the New Teſtament? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion: for I can ſee no churches inſtituted by Chriſt, in the New Teſtament, beſide the univerſal, but congregational

congregational churches; neither do I see, that a nation can be a church, unless it could be made a congregation, as was the nation of Israel; and my opinion about the church seems to me to agree with the account our reformers have given of it, in the Scottish confession, sworn to in the national covenant, to which I here refer.

Quer. 16. Is it your opinion, That the members of the visible church are only those who have the credible marks of regeneration? or not?

Anf. The members of the visible church are only those whom our Lord points out to us, and commands us to love, with a peculiar love, in his new commandment, John xiii. 34. 35.

Quer. 17. Is it your opinion, That the body of believers, or church-members, have a right to determine the admission or non-admission of persons to the Lord's table, together with the ministers and elders? or not?

Anf. None can be admitted to communion in the Lord's supper, with a congregation of Christ, without the consent of that congregation; and there must be a profession of mutual brotherly love in them that partake together in that ordinance.

Quer. 18. Is it your opinion, That the admission of unbelievers to the Lord's table doth pollute the ordinance unto fellow-believing communicants, and hinder saints from enjoying communion with the Lord, and with one another, in that ordinance? or not?

Anf. The admission of visible unbelievers to that ordinance mars the visible communion of saints in it; and so far as their communion with the Lord, in the ordinance, is connected with that visible communion, so far it mars that also.

Quer. 19. Is it your opinion, That a single congregation of believers, with their pastor, are not under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority of superior church-judicatures, nor censurable by them, either as to doctrine, worship, or practice? or not?

Anf. A congregation or church of Jesus Christ, with its presbytery, is, in its discipline, subject to no jurisdiction under heaven.

Quer. 20. Is it your opinion, That a single congregation of believers hath power, not only to chuse, but to ordain their own pastors? or not?

Anf. If by ordination be meant the laying on of hands, it is not my opinion.

Quer.

Quer. 21. Is it your opinion, That it is unwarrantable to take parents engaged to educate their children, when baptized, according to the confeſſion of faith of this church? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion.

Quer. 22. Is it your opinion, That Chriſt, by his aſcenſion, hath tranſlated the place of the church's worſhip from earth to heaven, and the ſeat of the church's power? or not? And, if it be, In what ſenſe do you underſtand it?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That heaven itſelf, where Chriſt our High Prieſt is entered, and where he ſits ruling on the throne of his father David, is what we now have, inſtead of the worldly ſanctuary, and the holy places made with hands, and what we have inſtead of mount Zion, where David's throne was ſet.

Quer. 23. Is it your opinion, That a miniſter's preaching the neceſſity of repentance, and a mourning frame of heart, in order to fit people for approaching to the Lord's table, is to make them ſeek for a righteouſneſs of their own? or not?

Anſ. It is not my opinion; if he do not preach up repentance, and a mourning frame, inſtead of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which is to deſtroy repentance and a mourning frame.

Quer. 24. Is it your opinion, That becauſe God or his Spirit doth all for us in the buſineſs of ſalvation, that therefore we are to do nothing? or not?

Anſ. God forbid that it ſhould be my opinion.

Quer. 25. Is it your opinion, That the practice of our anceſtors, at the reformation and revolution, in defending the true religion by arms, againſt the unjuſt oppreſſion of Papiſts and tyrants, was unwarrantable? or not?

Anſ. The Proteſtant cauſe, (ſo far as the ſword is concerned in it), and the revolution, is a civil, not properly an eccleſiaſtical cauſe; and a moſt righteous cauſe it is, as it ſtands in oppoſition to antichriſtian tyranny, and oppreſſion of the conſciences and juſt liberties of men; and thus it is the common cauſe of mankind againſt ſlavery of ſoul and body.

Quer. 26 Do you think yourſelf obliged, in conſcience, to teach and publiſh theſe your opinions, differing from the received doctrine of this church, unto the people? or not?

Anſ. I think myſelf obliged in conſcience to declare every truth of Chriſt, and keep nothing back, but to ſpeak all the words of this life, and to teach his people to obſerve all things whatſoever he commands, ſo far as I can underſtand;

and that, notwithstanding of others their differing from me, and my being exposed to hazard in the declaring of them.

A query separately put to Mr Glas by the synod.

Considering that in Mr Glas's answers to the proposal, If he did adhere to his former subscription of the Confession of Faith and *Formula*, and would again renew it? he says, his scruples against signing are mainly the two therein mentioned: they think it convenient that he be interrogate, If he hath freedom in his mind to sign all the other articles of the Confession of Faith, as the confession of his faith?

Mr Glas's answer.

I have not freedom to refuse any thing in our Confession, but what relates to the passage already mentioned, in the chapter concerning Christian liberty, and liberty of conscience, and in the chapter concerning synods.

An

An Explication of that PROPOSITION contained in Mr Glas's anſwers to the ſynod's queries, "A congregation or church of Jeſus "Chriſt, with its preſbytery, is, in its diſ- "cipline, ſubject to no juriſdiction under "heaven."

TOGETHER WITH

A LETTER concerning communion in the Lord's Supper. In anſwer to ſome conſiderations on that ſubject ſent to the author by a friend.

Iſ. iv. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.*

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1728.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

IF any ſhall find themſelves obliged to appear againſt what is here advanced, it is intreated, that they bring with them no other authority but that of the word of God alone; and that they do not ſatisfy themſelves with referring to what others have done before them, but fairly bring forth what light they themſelves have to offer, from the word of God, againſt what is here ſaid, and againſt that only; and, further, that they forbear metaphyſical wrangling, and charging the author with any erroneous opinion not expreſsly owned by him in theſe papers; and this, if they would not loſe their labour, for clearing the truth, and convincing thoſe whom they judge erroneous.

The explication of the before-mentioned propoſition.

SOme are at a loſs how to underſtand this propoſition and how far a practice ſuitable to it may take place without prejudice to the preſent eſtabliſhment; and therefore ſome-

thing needs to be ſaid, 1. For clearing the ſenſe of the propoſition. 2. For ſhewing how far the intendment of it is without prejudice to the preſent eſtabliſhment.

As to the *firſt* of theſe, we muſt again conſider, 1. What may be meant by a congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt? 2. What by its preſbytery? 3. What by its diſcipline? and, 4. How it is ſaid to be in its diſcipline ſubject to no juriſdiction under heaven?

If theſe things be cleared, there will be no remaining difficulty about the ſenſe of the propoſition. But before we proceed to them, we muſt take notice, that as the query to which this propoſition is an anſwer, took its riſe from Mr Glas's declining to affirm, that the conſtitution of the church of which the *Formula* ſpeaks, is founded in the word of God; ſo the propoſition reſpects no other thing but that word of God, and what appears to the author of the propoſition from thence: and therefore unto that word we muſt have reſpect, in explaining the propoſition. And whence ſhould we have our notions of the church, if it be not from ſcripture-revelation? Or if this matter be no way deſcribed or determined there, who then ſhould deſcribe or determine it to us? But if there be any that think Chriſt hath not appointed any church order or government, nor laid down any plan of it, in his word, and therefore men may make what model of it they think moſt convenient; or if there be that think the plan laid down by Chriſt and his apoſtles, concerned only the firſt age or ages of Chriſtianity, and that it is in the power of more advanced ages to alter it for their own conveniency, as ſeems meet to their wiſdom; ſuch will not ſee the need of troubling their heads with this propoſition, or any explication of it: and therefore, without troubling ourſelves further with them, we ſhall proceed to explain the ſeveral branches of the propoſition by the light of ſcripture revelation, which will no doubt be very agreeable to the authors of the query, who have ſubſcribed to this, as a great and important truth, "That the government of the church is founded in the word "of God," and reckon it a crime of a very hainous nature to alter their opinions on this head.

1. The firſt thing in the propoſition that comes to be cleared is, "A congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt."

And, 1. Here it is obvious, that the words *congregation* and *church* are made of the ſame import. Yet it is a matter very inſignificant what they be in any human propoſition; but we are told, "Every word of God is pure: He is a ſhield

"unto

" unto them that put their truſt in him. Add thou not unto " his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." And therefore the import of God's word on this ſubject muſt be diligently ſought after; and if the propoſition has added nothing to his words here, it will be clear, and no lie in this part of it.

The word *church*, [ἐκκλησία,] when it is uſed in ſcripture to ſignify another thing than a Chriſtian *congregation*, it yet ſignifies a *congregation*. Thus that unlawful aſſembly at Epheſus brought together into the theatre againſt Paul by the craftſmen, is called ἐκκλησία, *a church*, Acts xix. 32. 41.; and ℣ 39. it ſignifies *an aſſembly*. Thus we ſee the uſe of the word in other caſes.

But this word is ordinarily applied in ſcripture unto a more ſacred uſe; and then indeed it ſometimes ſignifies the body aſſembling, and ſometimes the aſſembly of that body; but ſtill a congregation. The whole body of the diſciples at Corinth is called the *church*, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. And we find the aſſembly of that body alſo called the *church*, 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20.—— " When ye come together in the church."—— " When ye come together into one place." See, to this purpoſe, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. 35. " Let your women keep ſilence " in the churches.——And if they will learn any thing, let " them aſk their huſbands at home; for it is a ſhame for wo- " men to ſpeak in the church." The women were members of the church at Corinth, whether at home or in the aſſembly: ſo that the different aſſemblies of that ſame body of men and women that came together into one place, from time to time, to eat the Lord's ſupper, and to teach and hear, are called *churches*: " Let your women keep ſilence in the aſ- " ſemblies.——If they will learn any thing, let them aſk " their huſbands at home; for it is a ſhame for a woman to " ſpeak in the aſſembly."

The whole nation of Iſrael is called a *church*, Acts vii. 38. But that was a congregation, and had one place of worſhip, the tabernacle of the congregation. The catholic church of Chriſt, his holy nation and kingdom, the antitype of that church of Iſrael, is alſo a congregation, having one place of worſhip, where they all aſſemble by faith, and hold communion: and when all the members of it are fully gathered in, they will be one glorious aſſembly. We find it called the " general aſ- " ſembly and church of the firſt born, whoſe names are writ- " ten in heaven," Heb. xii. 22. 23.

It may be a queſtion, if all the diſciples of Chriſt through-

out

out the world be called the church, any otherwiſe than as they appear, and, in the judgment of charity, are reckoned to be of this "general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born?"

But the propoſition plainly ſpeaks of a particular "church "of Chriſt." wherein this "general aſſembly" is ſomeway viſible; ſuch as the church in Jeruſalem, the church at Antioch, the church at Corinth, the church at Epheſus, *&c.* If theſe churches appear to have been no more but congregations, or companies aſſembling together in one place, it will then be manifeſt, that, throughout the word of God, the word *church*, in this matter, is of the ſame uſe as in the propoſition; and if this appear to have been the caſe in Jeruſalem, there will be no great ground of needful diſpute about the reſt.

Before we proceed to inquire into this, it may be obſerved, that we do not find the officers or repreſentatives of any church or churches, or any congregation or aſſembly of them, called *the church*; but we find the people diſtinguiſhed from them, and called *the church:* Acts xv. 22. "It pleaſed the "apoſtles and elders, with the whole church." Acts xiv. 23. "And when they had ordained them elders in every "church." Acts xx. 17. 28.—— "He ſent to Epheſus, "and called the elders of the church.—— Take heed unto "yourſelves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy "Ghoſt hath made you overſeers, to feed the church of "God."—— By theſe and ſuch like places, it appears, that the propoſition ſpeaks in ſcripture-ſtyle, when it ſays *a church of Jeſus Chriſt, with its preſbytery.* It is true, that both flock and overſeers are frequently called *the church*; but it cannot be made manifeſt, that the overſeers or repreſentatives of the flock or flocks are ever called *a church*, as it is manifeſt, that the whole flock, the multitude, the πλῆθος, or full body of the diſciples, when ſpoken of diſtinctly from the overſeers, is called *the church.* The *church-repreſentative*, as it is called, is a thing altogether foreign to the ſcripture-ſtyle; and the uſe that has been made of it in after ages, ſhews the wiſdom of God in forbearing to afford any encouragement to it, in his word, and cutting off from us all pretences unto any authority from his word, for our own inventions.

Now, it cannot well be denied by them that believe there is a plan of the conſtitution and order of the church laid down in the ſcriptures, that the church in Jeruſalem, ſetting aſide what may be ſhewed to be extraordinary, is a pattern

tern for the conſtitution and order of all the churches of Chriſt: and therefore they who contend for the divine right of that church deſcribed in the *Formula*, appeal conſtantly to the church at Jeruſalem, judging their great ſtrength lies there. Here then we muſt come for the deciſion of this queſtion, Whether the churches of Chriſt be only congregations? And the whole of this cauſe turns upon this, Whether the church in Jeruſalem was many congregations united in one common preſbytery? or, Whether it was but one congregation aſſembling from time to time in one place? And though there might be many meetings of diſciples in Jeruſalem, yet if the whole body, called *the church*, aſſembled together in one place from time to time?

They that contend for many congregations united in their common overſeers, inſiſt mainly upon the multitude of diſciples there; from which they infer, it was impoſſible they could all be one congregation.

It is true, there were very great numbers converted in Jeruſalem by the goſpel, and many diſciples of Chriſt in Jeruſalem; as theſe paſſages ſhew, Acts i. 15. "The number "of the names together were about a hundred and twenty." Acts ii. 41. —— "And the ſame day were added unto them "about three thouſand ſouls;" and, ℣ 47. "The Lord "added to the church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved." Acts iii. 11. "And as the lame man which was healed, held Peter "and John, all the people ran together unto them in the "porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." Acts iv. 4.— "Many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thouſand." Acts v. 14. "And believers were the more added to the "Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Acts vi. 1. 7. "And in thoſe days, when the number of the diſciples was "multiplied,—— and the word of God increaſed, and the "number of the diſciples multiplied in Jeruſalem greatly, "and a great company of the prieſts were obedient to the "faith." All this is before the diſperſion by the perſecution that aroſe about Stephen, Acts viii. 1. and xi. 19. After that diſperſion, we find James and the elders ſaying to Paul, Acts xxi. 20. "Thou ſeeſt, brother, how many thouſands "of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous "of the law."

Now, beſides that it cannot be made appear, that all the multitudes were members of the church at Jeruſalem *, the

* *See* Clarkſon's primitive Epiſcopacy.

inference

inference that is made from theſe accounts of the numbers is plainly beſide the ſcope of the Holy Ghoſt in ſpeaking of the numbers, which is not to ſhew, that the diſciples and church-members in Jeruſalem could not be one congregation, but many, under one common preſbytery. There is not the leaſt intimation of ſuch a ſcope: but the plain ſcope of his ſpeaking of the numbers is, to ſhew the great power of the grace of the Lord Jeſus by the goſpel, and the accompliſhment of the Old-Teſtament prophecies, in gathering ſinners unto him. If we had but the leaſt hint of their being divided into ſeveral congregations, then the inference would have the more weight; but that ſeems to be a thing much avoided, in the account we have of the church at Jeruſalem. We find a conſiderable difficulty aroſe from the multiplication of the number of the diſciples in that church, Acts vi; and it may be thought it would have been a very good expedient, to have divided them into ſeveral congregations, for remedying that evil that aroſe from their numbers. But what do the apoſtles of Chriſt under the direction of the Holy Ghoſt? They call the multitude of the diſciples unto them, and ſeven deacons are choſen for ſerving tables to the whole multitude in common. And they that inſiſt upon this inference from the number of the diſciples in that church, allow no place for deacons but in a congregation. They are alſo obliged to own, that there were not different fixed congregations in Jeruſalem, but that they aſſembled in different places promiſcuouſly, and were all under the common overſight of the apoſtles acting as elders, and afterward of the elders bearing part of the burthen with the apoſtles. But this is to give up the cauſe of different fixed congregations under a common preſbytery, and to ſtrike out ſeſſions; and makes the church at Jeruſalem ſomething very near akin to one congregation. They that reaſon from the conſtitution and order of the church in Jeruſalem, to ſhow what is of divine right in this matter, are bound ſtill to follow what they take to have been the order in that church; and not to change it, by erecting ſeſſions under the juriſdiction of a preſbytery in different fixed congregations. Yet this inference from the number of the diſciples in that church, howſoever wide, might be tolerable, if it were not croſs to plain texts, ſhewing that the church in Jeruſalem was a congregation. And it is not a decent way of treating the ſcripture, to draw long conſequences from texts that have another ſcope, contrary to plain texts againſt thoſe conſequences; or to explain clear o-

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pen ſcriptures, by conſequences from other texts that do not appear to have theſe conſequences in their ſcope; and thus to explain away the plain obvious ſenſe of theſe clear ſcriptures. This would not be a fair way of treating a human writing. And there muſt be ſomething elſe than the influence of ſcripture-light, and a regard to ſome other thing than the conſiſting of the ſcripture with itſelf, at the bottom of this way of doing.

Now, let us ſee what the Holy Ghoſt ſays expreſsly of the multitude of diſciples in the church at Jeruſalem. He tells us, (and this is a ſhort ſum of the ſtate of the church in Jeruſalem), Acts ii. 41. 42. "The ſame day were added unto "them above three thouſand ſouls. And they continued ſted-"faſtly in the apoſtles doctrine and fellowſhip, and in break-"ing of bread, and in prayers." ℣ 44. "And all that be-"lieved were together *." ℣ 46. "And they continued daily "with one accord † in the temple." ℣ 47. "And the "Lord added to the church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved." Acts iv. 31. 32. "And when they had prayed, the place was "ſhaken where they were aſſembled together. And the "multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of "one ſoul." Acts v. 12. 13. "And they were all with one "accord in Solomon's porch ‡. And of the reſt durſt no "man join himſelf to them: but the people magnified them." Acts vi. 1. 2. 3. 5. 6. "And in thoſe days, when the number "of the diſciples was multiplied, there aroſe a murmuring of "the Grecians againſt the Hebrews. Then the twelve call-"ed

* ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, which is ſometimes tranſlated *in one place*. And I know not if that phraſe occurs any where in the New Teſtament in another ſignification. See thoſe places where it is found, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 20. Acts ii. 1. and iii. 1. Luke xvii. 35.

† ὁμοθυμαδὸν. Neither ſeems this word to be uſed in the New Teſtament, but in the caſe of more or fewer concurring perſonally in the ſame action. See thoſe texts, Acts i. 14. and ii. 1. and iv. 24. and v. 12. and vii. 57. and viii. 6. and xii. 20. and xv. 25. and xviii. 12. Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7.

‡ Here the Holy Ghoſt tells us expreſsly of the place where they all aſſembled with one accord, Solomon's porch. Againſt this it is ſaid, That it was impoſſible for Solomon's porch to hold them all. But they that ſo flatly contradict the teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt, muſt own, if they will believe him in any caſe, that the place now under that name was greater than the porch of old built by Solomon: for by comparing chap. iii. 11. with chap. iv. 4.

" ed the multitude * of the diſciples unto them, and ſaid, It " is not meet that we ſhould leave the word of God, and " ſerve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among " you ſeven men of honeſt report, — whom we may appoint " over this buſineſs. And the ſaying pleaſed the whole mul- " titude: and they choſe Stephen, *&c.* whom they ſet be- " fore the apoſtles". Acts xxi. 18. 22. " The day follow- " ing, Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were " preſent. And they ſaid unto him, The multitude † muſt " needs come together: for they will hear that thou art " come." Acts xv. 4. 5. 6. 12. 13. 22. " And when they " were come to Jeruſalem, they were received of the church, " and of the apoſtles and elders. — But there roſe up certain " of the ſect of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying. —— " And the apoſtles and elders came together for to conſider " of this matter. —— Then all the multitude ‡ kept ſilence, " and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul. —— And after " they had held their peace, James anſwered, ſaying, Men " and brethren, hearken unto me. —— Then it pleaſed the " apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen " men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and " Barnabas."

What now ſhould be the ſcope of the Spirit of God, in telling us of all that believed; the multitude of them that believed; the multitude of the diſciples; the whole church; their being together, or in one place; their continuing with one accord, or in perſonal communion in the temple, and in Solomon's porch; and their being a ſeparate body there, the reſt not daring to join themſelves to them; their joining all together in the choice of deacons to ſerve them in the matter of their common charity; and joining with the apoſtles and their elders in ſending letters to Antioch; and all this without ever giving us the leaſt hint of their being divided into many congregations? Does he thus conſtantly ſpeak of

we ſee that two thouſand at leaſt were converted in that place, by that ſermon, and theſe were not all they that heard the word there. But if they who would make the numbers ſo great that they could not be one aſſembly, will have the number converted by that ſermon, in that porch, to be five thouſand, they muſt alſo acknowledge that this ſame porch held more than five thouſand.

* τὸ πλῆθος. † πλῆθος.

‡ Πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος. See Lauder on the divine inſtitution of biſhops, having churches conſiſting of, *&c. p.* 17.

them

them as one undivided body, assembling frequently and ordinarily in one place for the worship of God, and all matters of common concern to them, and leave us to make out a constitution and order of that church, which should be followed, as a plan laid down by the Holy Ghost for after ages, and this from the number of the disciples its being so great, that the church of Jerusalem could not be as he seems expressly to say? It were more agreeable to a due regard to the scriptures of truth, to say something for reconciling the scripture-account of the nature of the church in Jerusalem, with the numbers of disciples there, than to use an indecent freedom with the plain words of the Holy Ghost, to reconcile them with our own distant consequences, drawn from words spoken by him, beside his scope in these words.

And to this good purpose it is observable, that there were some things someway extraordinary in the church at Jerusalem, by reason of which a greater multitude could be one congregation there than in other places, where we read of churches of Christ in the New Testament. As, 1. The communion of goods among them. Acts ii. 44. 45. 46. "And all that believed —— had all things common, and "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all "men, as every man had need. —— And breaking bread "from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness, and "singleness of heart." And Acts iv. 32. 34. 35. "And the "multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of "one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the "things which he possessed was his own, but they had all "things common. Neither was there any among them that "lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, "sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were "sold, and laid them down at the apostles feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had "need." By this communion of goods, they were a body of people living upon a common stock, and had access to be much together, and to be well acquainted; and were not hindered, by their ordinary employments, from close communion in their private and public meetings, and from continuing daily with one accord in the temple. For thus they seem to have given up themselves wholly unto the business of their communion in the worship of God, and in the mutual duties of brotherly love, and in spreading the gospel. This was extraordinary: for the case was not the same in other churches; where the disciples laboured, for most part, in

their ordinary employments through the week, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. and aſſembled ordinarily on the Lord's day.

2. They had the conveniency of the temple for a meeting-place, where it was free to all ſorts and ſects of the Jews to aſſemble, without trouble or moleſtation, even from the Romans, if they did not diſturb their government, or make any uproar. The members of the church were all Jews, that had not yet forſaken the obſervation of the ceremonies of Moſes's law. And as it is plain, they preached openly in and about the temple; ſo the Chriſtian inſtitutions of baptiſm, and the eating of bread and drinking of wine in the Lord's ſupper, were like to ſome uſages among the Jews, and could not occaſion greater offence to the unbelieving Jews, than the preaching of the goſpel, and the great converſions thereby. We have ſeen before, that they were a ſeparate body, in ſome of their meetings in the temple; and it is alſo obſervable, that the people not yet joined to the church, and that durſt not join themſelves unto them, magnified them; and that they had favour with all the people for ſome time, Acts v. 11.—14. and Acts ii. 47.

When the perſecution became ſo hot, that they could not aſſemble with one accord in the temple, they were ſo ſcattered abroad, that it cannot be ſhewed there remained any more in Jeruſalem, during the perſecution, than might aſſemble in ſome private place: neither, after the heat of that perſecution was over, can it be ſhown, that there was any greater multitude in the church at Jeruſalem, than ſuch as might, and whom it behoved to come together in one place, Acts xxi. 18.—22. For though James and the elders ſpeak to Paul of many thouſands of Jews which believed; yet they do not tell that theſe thouſands were in the church at Jeruſalem: for by that time there were many other churches of believing Jews throughout all Judea, Acts ix. 31. Gal. i. 22. occaſioned by Paul's perſecuting, waſting, and ſcattering the church at Jeruſalem, and thoſe diſtinct from the church in Jeruſalem, and many believing Jews through the world, that came to the feaſt.

It is obſervable, that when the multitude became ſo great, and the perſecution ſuch, that they could not conveniently aſſemble with one accord in one place, it was ſo ordered, they were ſcattered abroad, and other churches made out of them. And ſuch a great multitude of diſciples in Jeruſalem being kept together, till then aſſembling with one accord in the temple, without any inſinuation of its being divided into diſtinct

distinct congregations united in a presbytery, makes way for an inference of this nature, That the Holy Ghost, laying down a plan in the church at Jerusalem for all other churches of Christ, kept that great multitude in the state of a congregation, till it could no more be so; and then ordered things so, that it was scattered abroad, and other new churches erected after the fashion of it.

3. That great multitude was all of one heart and soul. The unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace and brotherly love, was there in its very prime; and the gift of tongues was there in exceeding abundance, with all gifts necessary unto mutual edification. For the members of that church were furnished and trained up there for spreading the gospel through the world: and the multitude was under the oversight and guidance of all the apostles of Christ. So that no objection, arising from the unwieldiness of such a great body of men, or from the difference of languages among them, can shake the truth of their being all one congregation, assembling from time to time with one accord in one place.

There might be manifold meetings of disciples in Jerusalem; but it seems pretty plain, that the body of disciples, called *the church*, could, and did frequently assemble with one accord in one place; and so was but one congregation.

Thus we find the words *church* and *congregation* of the same import in Jerusalem. And if this was the case there, we may expect to find it so in other places.

The first church of the Gentiles was at Antioch. The disciples there seem to have been brought into church-order by Barnabas,— Act xi. from ℣ 22.: and we are told, ℣ 26. that he and Paul "assembled themselves a whole year with "the church." And, Acts xiv. 26. 27. when they returned to Antioch from "the work which they had fulfilled," it is said, "they gathered the church together, and rehearsed all "that God had done with them, and how he had opened the "door of faith unto the Gentiles." Acts xv. 30. "When "they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when "they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered "the epistle." The church at Corinth was a numerous church, but still one congregation, and a church of the same kind with that at Cenchrea. See chap. xi. of the first epistle directed unto the church of God at Corinth, ℣ 18. 20. 22.— "When ye come together in the church, I hear there be di- "visions among you.— When ye come together therefore "into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper," [or, ye

ye cannot eat the Lord's ſupper]. "What, have ye not houſes "to eat and to drink in? or deſpiſe ye the church of God?" Chap. xiv. 23. "If therefore the whole church be come to-"gether into one place, and all ſpeak with tongues, and "there come in thoſe that are unlearned or unbelievers, will "they not ſay that ye are mad?"

The church at Epheſus is much ſpoke of in this matter, and the numbers of the converts there inſiſted on, the ſame way as in the caſe of Jeruſalem, to ſhew that it behoved the church there to conſiſt of many congregations united in a preſbytery. That church, when firſt erected, conſiſted of no great number, Acts xix. 7. 9. And it is true, that, from that time, the ſucceſs of the goſpel at Epheſus was very great. Paul's continuance there for the ſpace of two years, gave occaſion to all the Proconſular Aſia to hear the word of the Lord Jeſus, ℣ 10. So that the growth and prevalency of the word of God there, ℣ 28. furniſhed matter for the ſeven famous churches of Aſia, ℣ 26. whereof this of Epheſus was one; and without queſtion, it was a church of the ſame kind with the other ſix; and it appears from the latter end of the xix. chapter of the Acts, that all the town of Epheſus was very far from being converted to the faith.

When Paul, on his journey, calls the elders of that church to Miletus, he ſpeaks to them as the overſeers of one congregation, Acts xx. 28. "Take heed to yourſelves, and to "all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made "you overſeers, to feed the church of God, which he hath "purchaſed with his own blood." If the church at Epheſus had been many congregations united in a preſbytery, it would have been a way of ſpeaking very agreeable thereunto to have ſaid, "Take heed to yourſelves, and the *flocks* over which "the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers:" and this would have been reckoned a very ſtrong argument for a plurality of congregations under a preſbytery. But this way of ſpeaking is ſtill avoided in the writings of the New Teſtament. Here we find the diſciples of Chriſt at Epheſus diſtinguiſhed from the preſbytery, (which is that whereby ſome would make many congregations one church), and in this diſtinction from the preſbytery called all one flock and church: "Take heed "to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made "you overſeers." So that here was one flock, one congregation; not many flocks, not many churches or congregations, under the overſight of the preſbytery at Epheſus. And this was the church at Epheſus, the ſaints and faithful at Epheſus,

pheſus, all builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. In this ſtate remained the church at Epheſus for a long time after, as they that have been looking into antiquity have told us *, all communicating and praying together in one place.

It is true, the other churches had not the conveniency of the temple for a meeting-place, as had that firſt church at Jeruſalem: but they had "large upper rooms;" as we find the church at Troas aſſembled to partake of the Lord's ſupper "in an upper room," where there were many lights, and ſome ſat in windows, Acts xx. 6. 7. 8. 9. And it is probable that Aquila and Priſcilla, great inſtruments in promoting the kingdom of Chriſt, kept ſuch a houſe, where-ever they dwelt, as was a fit meeting-place for the church in that place. So we find Paul adviſing the church at Rome to ſalute Aquila and Priſcilla, probably then at Corinth, with the church in their houſe; and writing to the Corinthians from ſome other place, he tells them, that "Aquila and Priſcilla ſalute them, with "the church in their houſe," Rom. xvi. 1.—5. 1 Cor. vi. 19. We alſo read of one Nymphas, whom Paul deſires the Coloſſians to ſalute, with the church in his houſe; which was probably ſome one or other of the Aſian churches, perhaps Laodicea itſelf, Col. vi. 15. And Philemon had a church in his houſe, Philem. ℣ 2. He ſeems to have been ſome great man.

Upon this head of the ſcripture-language about the church, it will not be eaſy otherwiſe to ſatisfy any man's conſcience, how it is that the Holy Ghoſt, when ſpeaking of all the diſciples of Chriſt, in a nation or province, that could not aſſemble ordinarily in one place, ſo conſtantly abſtains from calling them the church of ſuch a nation, or province, or one church by themſelves; but ſays, the brethren or ſaints in ſuch places, Acts xv. 23. 2 Cor. i. 1. and the churches of Galatia, Gal. i. 2. the churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1. the churches of Aſia, 1 Cor. xvi. 19.; but when ſpeaking of the diſciples of Chriſt in a city or town, which might aſſemble together ordinarily in one place, calls them *a church*, ſaying, the church of Antioch, the church at Corinth, the church of Epheſus, and the like. Shall we believe, that ſuch a ſtate of the church has the ſtamp of divine authority upon it, that the Holy Ghoſt has ſo much forborn to favour with the name of a church, and in favour of which he has ſtrictly avoided

* See King's inquiry into the conſtitution, life, *&c.* chap. 2.

dropping

dropping ſo much as one word? He foreknew what deſolations would be brought upon the churches after his plan, by the inventions of men in this matter; and therefore he has cut off from them all pretences unto any authority from his words for their own inventions.

The whole nation of the Jews was one church, as was before ſaid, under the Old Teſtament; and it is very remarkable, that, after the diſperſion, all the diſciples of Chriſt in Judea are not called a church by themſelves, or one church, but churches, Acts ix. 31. Gal. i. 22. 1 Theſſ. ii. 14. It is true, this careful obſervation of the words of God in this matter is much deſpiſed by ſome; and they can ſee no weight in ſuch obſervations upon the words of God, becauſe they are plainly againſt them. But to ſhew what pains ſome very great and good men have been at, to find countenance from ſcripture-words, unto ſuch a ſtate of the church as they have been prejudiced in favour of, ſee how they go to work, to make all thoſe churches in Judea one church, in the ſcripture-ſtyle. They tell us, "Thoſe whom Paul perſecuted were "one church," Gal. i. 13. Acts viii. 3. And ſo were the diſciples whom he is ſaid to perſecute in thoſe texts. He perſecuted, and waſted, and made havock of the church of Jeruſalem, Acts viii. 1. 3. "But," ſay they, "he perſecuted more than "the church in Jeruſalem." And how is that made out? "He obtained letters from the chief prieſts to go to Damaſcus, "that if he found any of that way, he might bring them "bound to Jeruſalem; and had authority from them to bind "all that called upon Chriſt's name there," Acts ix. 2. 13. 14. After he had ſcattered the church at Jeruſalem abroad, and they had fled far from thence, he purſues them, and perſecutes them; not now called the church, nor the ſame church he made havock of, and waſted, Acts viii. but the diſciples, and all that called on Chriſt's name. But now, when he goes to Damaſcus, he is beyond Judea: And how does this make all the diſciples in Judea a church by themſelves, or one church? They tell us further, "We read of churches throughout Ju-"dea," Gal. i. 22. Acts ix. 31. Yes, after the diſperſion, and during the perſecution, there were churches erected throughout Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria. But how are the churches of Judea one church by themſelves; or how are the churches in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, one church? "The "church," ſay they, "that Paul perſecuted, was one church." Yes, Saul perſecuted the church at Jeruſalem: the Holy Ghoſt ſays ſo; and that he had letters, and a commiſſion, to perſecute

perſecute all that called on that name at Damaſcus; and he breathed out threatenings and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of the Lord where-ever they were. But does the Holy Ghoſt ſay, that all the diſciples of Chriſt, within the compaſs of ground, as far as Saul may be ſuppoſed to perſecute, were one church by themſelves? They ſay, "The churches of "Judea, to whom Paul was unknown by face, ſaid, He per-"ſecuted us in times paſt; he perſecuted us the churches:" for they will have the churches ſpeaking of themſelves in a church-capacity, and all joining as churches; for it would ſpoil all to ſay, that the diſciples of Chriſt that fled out of the church at Jeruſalem, for fear of Saul, and were now members of the churches in Judea that were raiſed in time of that perſecution, and to which Saul was not known by face, ſaid, "He that perſecuted us in times paſt, preacheth the "faith that once he deſtroyed." And next they ſay, "Paul "perſecuted one church, and ſo all theſe churches were one "church." It is ſaid Paul perſecuted the church at Jeruſalem: but is it ſaid, that all other churches and diſciples that might be perſecuted by him, were that one church that he waſted in Jeruſalem?

The Holy Ghoſt, in giving account of Saul's perſecution, and of the church in Jeruſalem, and of the ſcattered diſciples, and of the churches raiſed on occaſion of the waſting of the church in Jeruſalem, keeps very cloſe by his uſual way of ſpeaking on this head. But they, by confounding times, by conſequences very wide, and abſtract notions, would make the word of God to ſay the very thing, that, to the utmoſt, it every where avoids.

Our reformers, taking their notions of the church only from the word of God, acknowledge no other church of Chriſt beſides the univerſal, but congregations: as is to be ſeen in the Scots confeſſion of faith, art. 18. where we have theſe words: —— "Whereſoever, then, theſe former notes * "are ſeen, and of any time continue, (be the number never "ſo few, about two or three), there, without all doubt, is the "true church of Chriſt, who, according to his promiſe, is "in the midſt of them: not that univerſal, of which we "have before ſpoken, but particular, ſuch as were in Co-

* Thoſe notes are, 1. The true preaching of the word of God. —— 2. The right adminiſtration of the ſacraments of Chriſt Jeſus. —— 3. Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline uprightly miniſtered, as God's word preſcribes.

" rinthus, Galatia, Ephesus, and other places, wherein the " ministry was planted by Paul, and were of himself named " the churches of God: And such churches we, the inha- " bitants of the realm of Scotland, professors of Christ Jesus, " have in our towns and places reformed." And this is a part of that confession of faith which was sworn to in the national covenant. And what is said of the nature of the apostolic churches on this head by Mr Baxter and Mr Lauder against diocesan Episcopacy, and by King in his Inquiry into the constitution, *&c.* of the primitive church, may also be considered by them that have shown a great respect to those writers in opposition to prelacy.

2. But there is a second thing to be noticed in this part of the proposition, before we pass it. The church or congregation of which the proposition speaks, is distinguished from other assemblies and congregations, (which sometimes get the name *church*, as was noticed), and that by being called *a congregation of Jesus Christ*.

This is a congregation of Christ's disciples, that have been so far taught by his word and Spirit, as to be able to confess the faith which is in him. No man can call " Jesus the Lord, " without his Spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 3. The Apostle there speaks of the common operations and gifts of the Spirit of Christ. Compare ℣ 13. with chap. xiii. We cannot discern betwixt the common and special operations of the Spirit in others, or betwixt a temporary believer, who may fall away, and them that believe to the saving of the soul. " But as he that hath " not the Spirit of Christ, is (undoubtedly) none of his," Rom. viii. 9.; so he that no way appears, by his profession of the faith, to have the Spirit, no way appears to be one of Christ's; and so is no fit member of a congregation of Jesus Christ.

Now, the faith that is confessed by the disciples of Christ, respects the three glorious, equal, and distinct persons of the one only Godhead, in whose name we are baptized; and it respects them as they appear to us in the gospel-revelation of redemption and salvation in Jesus Christ: Matth. xxviii. 19. " Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in " the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy " Ghost."

The faith of Christians is the faith of Christ, the Son of God, Matth. xvi. 16. 17. 18. Acts viii. 36. 37.; and more especially under the New Testament, it is " faith in his " blood," Rom. iii. 25. and in him, as " delivered for our " offences,

" offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification," Rom. iv. 23. 24. 25. Rom. x. 6. 8. 9. 10. " But the righteouſneſs " which is of faith, ſaith —— The word is nigh thee, even " in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith " which we preach, That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth " the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God " hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved: For " with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with " the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation."

From this it may appear, that there is more in this confeſſion of the faith than a bare aſſenting unto, or ſubſcribing any form of words expreſſing the doctrine of faith: for though it may be very uſeful for a church, or many churches, to publiſh their faith to the world, and make it known in every age, ſo as to point out the word of God, and their ſenſe of it, in oppoſition to the hereſies and errors prevailing in the day wherein they live; yet it will require another ſort of a confeſſion, than a bare aſſent unto any ſuch form of words, (eſpecially if it be under any worldly conſtraint), to make a man accounted of as a diſciple of Chriſt, and ſo a fit member of a church of his. He muſt confeſs with the mouth, ſo as it may appear ſome way that it comes from his heart. And however weak and indiſtinct his confeſſion of the faith be, yet it muſt appear unto others, who ſhould account him a diſciple, to be hearty: " For with the heart man believeth " unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made." Thus we find, when the eunuch aſks Philip, " What doth " hinder me to be baptized?" he anſwers, " If thou believeſt " with all thine heart, thou mayſt;" and when he ſatisfied him of this, by his confeſſion, in conſequence of Philip's preaching, he baptized him, Acts viii. 35.—38. To the ſame purpoſe we may conſider, Acts v. 12. 13. 14. which more nearly touches the caſe of membership in a particular church or congregation of Jeſus Chriſt: " They were all " with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the reſt durſt " no man join himſelf unto them: but the people magnified " them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, " multitudes both of men and women." Might not the people that magnified them, have been admitted among them, and charitably thought of? No; they durſt not join themſelves to them: for they could not yet find in their hearts to confeſs the faith, whatever ſtrivings of the ſpirit they had been under; and there was ſuch an awe of God upon them, by means of what befel Ananias and Saphira, that they durſt not

feign a confeſſion, and join themſelves. This was the great advantage of that church, a glorious fruit of that awakening providence in the church. But was not the ſucceſs of the goſpel marred by this ſtrict ſeparation of the diſciples from others? No; the ſucceſs of the goſpel was the greater, and the church increaſed the more in number: "For multitudes "both of men and women were added to the Lord." And what were they? How are they diſtinguiſhed from the people that magnified them, and durſt not join themſelves unto them? They were believers, accounted ſo to be in the judgment of charity, upon the confeſſion they made of the faith of Chriſt. And there was great care among the diſciples in Jeruſalem to keep off ſuch as they believed not to be diſciples from their communion; as we ſee in that inſtance, Acts ix. 26. 27. 28. "When Saul aſſayed to join himſelf to the diſciples, they "were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a diſ- "ciple;" and ſo received him not, till the apoſtles "received "ſatisfaction from Barnabas about him." And when this church was firſt erected, after the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, it was made up of them that had been pricked in their hearts, and gladly received the word, Acts ii. 37.—40. 41. They made a ſeemingly hearty confeſſion of the faith, were added unto the hundred and twenty, became with them one church, and ſo ſeparated themſelves from that untoward generation, according to Peter's exhortation.

There is an unity of the faith of Chriſt's diſciples, Eph. iv. 3. 5. 13. And as the ſalvation of Chriſt is the common privilege of all that believe in all nations, Jude 3. Rev. v. 9. "And the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt is unto all, and upon "all them that believe, without difference," Rom. iii. 21. 22.; ſo there is but one faith; and the confeſſion of this faith, as it is one, in all them that are Chriſt's throughout the world, qualifies a man for being a member of a church of Jeſus Chriſt. By this means a fit member of any one church may be a member of any true church of Chriſt throughout the world. And this was the catholiciſm that took place in the beginning of Chriſtianity. But a church of which a man cannot be a member by a hearty confeſſion of this one faith, without a confeſſion of the faith of doctrines about which the diſciples of Chriſt, by reaſon of different meaſures of light, have differed, and with reſpect to which they are commanded to forbear one another in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit, is off from the catholic footing upon which church communion went from the beginning.

Let

Let a man confeſs what doctrines he will, yet if he appear not hearty in the confeſſion of the one faith, he cannot be a member of a congregation of Chriſt's diſciples; and they ought not to hold communion with him as a diſciple: but however any man differ from other diſciples of Chriſt, if he ſhew a hearty agreement with them in the confeſſion of the faith, as it is one, and eſſay to join himſelf to any congregation of Chriſt's diſciples, they are bound to receive him. If he decline to join to a company of diſciples, ſeparated from the unbelieving world, and joined together in the confeſſion of the one faith, and that becauſe they do not all think in all things as he does, then he is, in this point, guilty of a breach of the catholic unity, and not they. Every diſciple of Chriſt muſt confeſs the whole truths of Chriſt, the very leaſt of them, at all hazards, ſo far as he knows them; but it is the confeſſion of the one faith that makes a man a proper member of a church of Chriſt, or a proper object of brotherly love.

The diſciples of Chriſt that confeſs the faith of the Son of God, delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification, do alſo call him Lord: for to this end "Chriſt "both died and roſe again, that he might be Lord both of "the dead and of the living:" ſo that "whether we live, we "live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the "Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's," Rom. xiv. 7. 8. 9. "The love of Chriſt conſtrains his diſci-"ples, becauſe they thus judge, that if one died for all, "then were all dead: that they which live ſhould not hence-"forth live to themſelves, but to him that died for them, and "roſe again," 2 Cor. v. 14. 15.

As it is a vain thing to call Chriſt Lord, and not ſtudy to do the things that he ſays; ſo, whoſoever appears not to have a ſenſe of his authority upon his conſcience, but lives in open diſobedience to his laws, and profeſſes not repentance from dead works, nor a deſire to obſerve whatſoever he commands, cannot be, in the judgment of charity, accounted a diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt.

The diſciples of Chriſt, therefore, are obſervers of his inſtitutions, ſo far as they know them: they call on the name of the Lord Jeſus; they are ſtudying to follow him in thoſe commandments of God that are chiefly inſiſted on in his word; ſuch as, the command to deny ourſelves, and to take up our croſs and follow him; the command to love our enemies, and bleſs them, and pray for them, and the like. But the trying commandment of the New Teſtament, and the

the diſtinguiſhing fruit of faith, whereby the ſincerity of our faith, and of all our obedience, is tried and manifeſted, is the commandment of brotherly love; a peculiar love to the diſciples of Chriſt on his account, and for his ſake, John xiii. 34. 35. John xv. 1 Cor. xiii. Heb. vi. 9. 10. 11. and 1 John. There muſt be a profeſſion of this in all them that are to be accounted diſciples of Chriſt: "For by this ſhall all men know "that we are his diſciples, if we have love one to another. "And he that ſaith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, "is in darkneſs even until now; he that loveth his brother, "abideth in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling "in him."

It ſeems to be one great end of the inſtitution of a goſpel-church, that the diſciples may be in the conſtant and regular practice of the duties of this love toward one another. This love reſpects all the ſaints, all the diſciples of Chriſt throughout the world: but in vain do we pretend to love all the ſaints, while we ſhew forth no more love to ſuch of them as we have ſeen, than to the reſt of the world. Our love to God is to be tried by our love to our brother, whom we have ſeen, 1 John iv. 20.; and our love to the Lord Jeſus will be meaſured by our love to them at the laſt day, Matth. xxv. from ℣ 34. to the end. Now, there may be many of the diſciples of Chriſt whom we have but ſeldom acceſs to ſee, and ſo cannot perform the duties of this love towards them but occaſionally, and as providence ſometimes offers opportunity; but it is neceſſary, unto the eſtabliſhment in the faith, the comfort and full aſſurance of hope, in the diſciples of Chriſt, and unto their mutual edification in love, that they be conſtantly and regularly in the exerciſe of the duties of this love toward one another, where there is any company of them, that, by dwellings and circumſtances, can conveniently perform theſe duties toward one another. Heb. vi. 10. 11. "God is not unrighteous, to forget your "work and labour of love, which ye have ſhewed toward "his name, in that ye have miniſtered unto the ſaints, and do "miniſter. And we deſire that every one of you do ſhew the "ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end." Col. ii. 1. 2. "I would that ye knew what great conflict I "have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many "as have not ſeen my face in the fleſh: that their hearts "might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto "all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the ac-"knowledgment of the myſtery of God," &c. Heb. iii. 12.

13.

13. "Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an "evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. "But exhort one another daily while it is called, To-day; "leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of "ſin." Heb. x. 23. 24. "Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of "our faith without wavering;—and let us conſider one ano-"ther to provoke unto love and good works: not forſaking "the aſſembling of ourſelves together, as the manner of "ſome is; but exhorting one another," *&c.* 1 Theſſ. v. 11. "Wherefore comfort yourſelves together, and edify one "another, even as alſo ye do." 1 Cor. xii. 25. 26. 27.

From theſe and ſuch like places, it appears, that this conſtant and regular practice of the duties of this love, muſt be in a congregation, or a company of diſciples joined together, and aſſembling themſelves together for that purpoſe; and this cannot take place but in a congregation of diſciples. So this is one great end of the Lord's inſtitution of a goſpel-church.

But unto this it is neceſſary that all the members of ſuch churches be fit objects of this brotherly love, and the duties of it. Therefore we find the members of the apoſtolic churches called the brethren, and brethren for whom Chriſt died, according to the Lord's commandment: "That we "ſhould love one another, even as he loved us." The Apoſtle's exhortation to the elders of the church of Epheſus, is remarkable to this purpoſe: "Take heed," ſays he, "to "all the flock—to feed the church of God which he hath "purchaſed with his own blood." If there was any one of that flock or church of whom it could not be ſaid, in the judgment of charity, that he was purchaſed with the blood of God, the ſtrength of the Apoſtle's argument for their taking heed to all the flock, and feeding them, would be gone with reſpect to that perſon. The church of the Theſſalonians, 2 Theſſ. i. 3. is commended for this, that "the charity "of every one of them all toward each other abounded:" which could not be, if every one of them all had not been meet objects of this charity or brotherly love; for this love has only brethren in Chriſt for the objects of it, 1 Theſſ. iv. 9. 10. To what purpoſe would all the members of the churches be ſo frequently exhorted to love one another with this love, if this were not to be ſuppoſed, that they were all proper objects of this love, and the duties of it? We find the church at Epheſus, Rev. ii. 4. 5. condemned by the Lord for the decay of this love, and the fruits of it among them, and threatened with the diſſolution of their church, the taking

king away of their candleſtick out of its place, on that account: for thus they came ſhort of the end of their being a church. Some of the other Aſian churches are condemned for holding in their communion ſuch as were not meet objects of this love. The church of Corinth is called to refuſe communion with every one called a brother, and living ſcandalouſly; and to purge out the old leaven, that they may be a new lump, 1 Cor. v. And, for their enlargement, and that they might not be ſtraitened in their own bowels, they are exhorted, 2 Cor. vi. not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. Perhaps there may be ſome view there unto ſome among them, who began to deny the reſurrection, after they had confeſſed the faith of Chriſt. We are called in this matter of Chriſtian communion, "To turn away from ſuch "as have a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it," 2 Tim. iii. 5.; and "to withdraw ourſelves from every bro- "ther that walketh diſorderly, in diſobedience to the com- "mands of Chriſt," 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. And that great rule of diſcipline laid down by our Lord, Matth. xviii. is ſubſervient to the new commandment of love among his diſciples in a church; as appears from the context: for when a brother treſpaſſes, ſo as our brotherly love to him may cool, we are to take the pains there preſcribed to reclaim him; but if he obſtinately perſiſt againſt the endeavours of the church, then we are commanded to refuſe communion, and not to walk in the peculiar duties of this love with him.

As the confeſſion of the one faith gives a man a right to the title of a diſciple; ſo this brotherly love muſt proceed upon this unity of the faith: for otherwiſe it will be no more Chriſtian brotherly love, but ſectarian and party love, like that which takes place among the factions and parties of this world. In the profeſſion of this catholic faith and love in Chriſt, with the fruits of it, the firſt Chriſtians were diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world, and united among themſelves, and were conformed to their Lord Jeſus Chriſt: ſo they were deſigned *ſaints*, the ſaints and faithful in Chriſt Jeſus; and all the firſt churches "were churches of ſuch "ſaints," 1 Cor. xiv. 33. They were alſo repreſented in the viſion to John by golden candleſticks, on account of the matter of which they ought to be made up.

But againſt the ſubſerviency of Chriſt's inſtitution of a church, conſiſting only of his diſciples, unto this new commandment of brotherly love, it is objected, not only that it ſerves to make diviſion, and raiſe animoſities in the world, but

but that it always, in all the ways wherein it has been attempted in later ages, has occasioned division among the disciples of Christ, and their separation from one another.

As to the first thing in this objection, it lies as well against Christianity itself, and against the new commandment of brotherly love, as against a church, consisting only of proper objects of brotherly love. For it is certain, that commandment of Christ, wherein we are injoined to take a peculiar complacence in his disciples on his account, and to love them for the peculiar relation they have to him, does not oblige us to bestow this love upon all men: and, because in the duties of this love to them, we express our love to Jesus Christ, whom the world hates, and so appear to the men of this world to be on his side of that controversy betwixt the seed of the woman and of the serpent, it is no marvel if the men of this world hate us; hence there will be an open division betwixt the disciples of Christ, in their obedience to this command, and the men of this world, as our Lord hath warned us; and for this the world will be condemned at the last day. See John xv. from ℣ 17. to the end, and xvi. 1. 2. 3. 2 Thess. i. 3.—6. 1 John iii. 11. 12. 13.

But it is much to be lamented, that since a sort of Christians have been made in great numbers, by the influence of the powers of the earth, and not by the influence of the gospel upon their minds and hearts, and since the outer court of God's house has been trodden under foot by the Gentiles under Antichrist, the disciples of Christ, the objects of brotherly love, have been divided and separated from one another, upon attempts to revive Christ's institution in this matter. Yet the blame cannot be laid upon his institution, but upon the disciples themselves. And for this consider, 1. In several of the steps of reformation from the corruptions of Antichrist, the disciples of Christ, through different measures of light, have been wofully divided from one another. Take, for instance, that division betwixt Luther, and those that stood with him, on the one hand, and Zuinglius and Calvin, and those that were with them, on the other, about the Lord's supper. 2. By means of imposition, and the driving of uniformity, the disciples of Christ have been so far engaged in sects and parties, and have been trained up in such a regard every one to the way of his own sect, that any attempt to bring them into communion in love upon those things wherein they are all one, and all divided from the men of this world, however strictly joined with them in their sects, must

meet with great oppoſition from them. And much of this is owing to ſome of their teachers, by whom they have received the goſpel, who preſs upon them the peculiarities of their own ſect, which have nothing to ſupport them, for moſt part, but human authority, and that with ſuch zeal, as if religion were to ſtand and fall with them. 3. As has been noticed, obedience to the Lord's new commandment, and the following of his inſtitution in this matter, according to it, cannot miſs of expoſing the diſciples of Chriſt to the hatred of the men of this world. And it is alſo to be noticed, that we have all a ſtrong bias toward the friendſhip and fellowſhip of this world, and toward conformity to a preſent world, and that it is not eaſy to reconcile us to the croſs; ſo that it is no wonder to ſee many of the diſciples contenting themſelves in a way of religion, much magnified and extolled, that does not expoſe them much to the world's hatred, and wherein they may indulge themſelves in compliances with, and conformity to the world; and riſing up againſt a way that expoſes them to the croſs, and has no worldly advantages attending it. We want not inſtances of this in the New Teſtament; and what has been, may be again.

By theſe and ſuch like conſiderations, it may appear, that the blame of diviſions ariſing upon Chriſt's diſciples their attempting to follow his inſtitution in this matter, is not to be caſt on his inſtitution, which ſerves to join them all together in love in that wherein they are all one, and divided from the world; but it muſt lie upon the diſciples themſelves: and while thoſe diſciples of his that do oppoſe it are ſo far guilty of ſchiſm, the infirmities and corruptions attending thoſe, that have from time to time attempted to follow the commandment of Chriſt in this matter, ſhould not be juſtified, nor ſhould their faults be improven againſt the pure and holy commandment of Jeſus Chriſt.

However many diſciples of his may oppoſe it, yet it is moſt agreeable to the new nature in them, which leads to ſeparation from the men of this world, and conſtant communion in love with the diſciples of the Lord. And though we be bound to forbear the practice of indifferent things, in the caſe of offending weak brethren; yet no man will alledge, that we ought to forbear commanded duty, for fear of offending weak brethren; or that we ought to ſet about no ſtep of reformation from any corrupt ſtate of things, under which the diſciples are, till they be all ſatisfied in it. The diſciples that openly confeſſed Chriſt, and followed him, were not to be blamed for tranſgreſſing the law of brotherly love; becauſe they

they differed therein from thoſe that would not confeſs him for fear, and becauſe they were afraid of being put out of the ſynagogue, and becauſe "they loved the praiſe of men more "than the praiſe of God." The hundred and twenty diſciples, Acts i. "waited not for the reſt of Chriſt's diſciples at "that time; and upon them came the Spirit." See Heb. x. 25.

3. There remains yet a third thing that belongs to the ſcripture-notion of a diſciple of Chriſt, and member of a church of his; and that is, the confeſſion of the Chriſtian hope, "the one hope." This hope is one of thoſe notable three of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Cor. xiii. 8.—13. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, "they ſhall fail; whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; "whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away.—— "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, theſe three; but "the greateſt of theſe is charity." Concerning this hope, and the profeſſion of it, ſee theſe texts, Heb. iii. 6. "—But "Chriſt as a Son over his own houſe: whoſe houſe are we, if "we hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope "firm unto the end." Col. i. 23. "If ye continue in the "faith,—and be not moved away from the hope of the go-"ſpel." Heb. x. 23. 24. 25. "Let us hold faſt the pro-"feſſion of our hope" (as in the firſt language) "with-"out wavering, (for he is faithful that promiſed.) And let "us conſider one another to provoke unto love, and to "good works: not forſaking the aſſembling of ourſelves to-"gether," &c.

He does not appear to be a diſciple of Chriſt, who does not appear to prefer that eternal life contained in the promiſes of the goſpel, and hid with Chriſt in God, to appear when he appears, unto a life in this world; and who does not confeſs himſelf denied to the one, in the hope of the other; or does not confeſs Moſes's choice, and own himſelf a ſtranger on earth, looking for the heavenly country, and counting all things loſs to be found in Chriſt, having his righteouſneſs, "and to attain to the" glorious "reſurrection "of the dead." There are doubtleſs various degrees of this hope, and of the profeſſion of it. There is hope, and the aſſurance of hope; and there is the aſſurance, and the full aſſurance of this hope: but ſomething leſs or more of this hope, in the profeſſion of it, belongs unto the notion the ſcripture gives us of a diſciple of Chriſt, and a member of the church. This hope in us, as it is influenced by faith in

Christ, our righteousness, and love in him to all the saints, so it "will be according to the measure of that faith and love," Col. i. 3. 4. 5. 1 Thess. i. 3. Heb. xi. 1. Heb. vi. 10. 11. 1 John iii. from ℣ 18. to the end. When the profession of faith and love was lively, so was the profession of this hope; and there is no greater evidence of the decay of faith and love, than the want of that confidence and rejoicing of the hope, in the very profession of it that appeared in the first Christians, the first members of the churches of Christ.

In the beginning, when men became Christians only by the influence of the gospel of Christ, and when there was no worldly advantage attending Christianity, it appeared in their profession of the faith of Christ, that they were in earnest about the eternal life revealed in the gospel, and that they preferred it unto a life in this world, and that they believed the truth of the gospel; and when they became companions of the suffering disciples, there was no reason to question their love to them. And when they confessed Christ with joy, in the face of persecution, and with the hazard of all that was near and dear unto them in this world, it was a good evidence of their hope in the other world. Even then there were hypocrites among them; but there was no ground to question their sincerity, while they held fast this profession. Yet there was in those days care taken about the profession of them that were admitted unto full communion in the churches of Christ. Some professed a good liking to Christianity, that were not presently admitted to full communion in the churches; but were kept under instruction, till they were some way able to profess the Christian faith, love, and hope, and then they were called the *perfect*, Phil. iii. 15. But when the profession of Christianity came to be attended with worldly advantages, there was more need of nice scrutiny. Yet it fell out quite otherwise, unto the great dishonour of the Christian profession. Whole nations were brought to a sort of profession of the name of Christ; not by the influence of the gospel, but of the magistrate: and their profession was suitable unto the influence by which it was brought about. Ten thousand such converts were then baptized in one day; and, no doubt, there would be great joy among them that had the dispensing of that ordinance in their hands, to see so many Christians; but there was more than reason for that question, which was proposed when "Saul was seen among the prophets," "Who is their Father?" And the ancient profession of the Christian hope, which took place when the Christian profession

profeſſion expoſed men to the loſs of their all in this world, was loſt, now, when it was no loſs to a man's intereſt in this world, but his great advantage, to call himſelf a Chriſtian. Thus Chriſtianity (if that ſort of it may be ſo called) became national, intwiſted with the civil rights of mankind, attended with a hope in this life, and Chriſt's kingdom of this world. After this, the nations that were Heathen, becoming thus Chriſtian, were corrupted or reformed, according to the influence of the clergy, now dignified, and great men in the earth, and according to the influence of the princes of the earth, whoſe power was ſerviceable to the clergy. It was eaſy for the nations, thus brought from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity, to become Antichriſtian and idolatrous. And though the Lord's hand was remarkably ſeen at the Reformation, in reviving the light of the glorious goſpel, and making ſome "of the kings of the earth," in ſome meaſure, "withdraw "their power from the beaſt:" yet the reformation became national no otherwiſe than Chriſtianity became ſo at firſt; that is, by their ſubmitting to an external form of national reformation under the influence of thoſe in power. But while church-memberſhip goes not upon the footing of the ancient profeſſion of faith, hope, and charity, Chriſtianity will not appear in its primitive beauty and glory.

There have been attempts, ſince the Babyloniſh captivity, to revive this, and it has been much oppoſed: but, as was ſaid of the ſecond temple, when compared with the firſt, ſo it may be ſaid in this caſe, "Is it not as nothing in your eyes?" Yet we may be encouraged to build by this, "That the "Lord will come to this ſecond building." "Let us," therefore, "not forſake the aſſembling of ourſelves together, but "exhort one another; and ſo much the more, as we ſee the "day approaching."

So much has been ſaid of the members of which a church of Jeſus Chriſt is made up. And by this it is diſtinguiſhed from all other congregations, even though they ſhould be called *Chriſtian*, which do not conſiſt of the diſciples of the Lord Jeſus. By their being joined together in the confeſſion of the catholic faith, love, and hope, which is in him, they are diſtinguiſhed from all ſectarian ſocieties. For thus the diſciples are builded together in him, "for an habitation of "God, through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 22. "Chriſt the cor-"ner-ſtone, in whom all the building of God," the catholic church, "is fitly framed together," is alſo the foundation and corner in this little building, compared ℣ 21. So a company

pany of his disciples, joined together in him, as he stands in the confession of their faith, love, and hope, is a church of his. And this church is distinguished from the church-catholic by the disciples their being joined together thus, for holding constant communion in the ordinances of worship, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus, and glorifying the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "with one mind [ὁμοθυμαδον] in one "mouth," Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7.; and for the constant regular performance of the duties of brotherly love toward one another, and assembling themselves together from time to time, with one accord, in one place.

Such a congregation is a church of Jesus Christ. And it is "a habitation, a temple of God," Eph. ii. 22.; "a "dwelling-place and assembly of Mount Zion," Is. iv. 5. The church at Corinth is called *God's temple*, 2 Cor. vi. 16. and 1 Cor. iii. 9. 16. 17. "Ye are God's building.——Know "ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of "God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of "God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is ho-"ly, which temple ye are." The Apostle tells them he laid Christ for a foundation unto this building of God at Corinth, and calls every one that comes after him to carry on this building, to take heed how he builds up such a building that has such a foundation. It has been thought, that it is every particular believer that is there called the building or temple of God by himself; but a real believer cannot be destroyed, as they that defiled this temple at Corinth might be destroyed. It has been also thought, that it is of a building of doctrine that the Apostle is there speaking. No doubt, members of churches are framed and built in a church, and built up in it by means of doctrine; but it is of a building of persons that the Apostle is speaking: "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are "God's building, ye are the temple of God." And, seeing the Apostle, as the master-builder of the church at Corinth, laid Christ for the foundation of it, and all sorts of materials are not fit for a building that has such a precious foundation, he calls all that come after him, "to take heed, not only "that they lay no other foundation for a building there, but "also, that they build on this foundation," such materials as are suitable to it. And the reason he gives for their taking heed to this is, that "every such building, every man's work "in it, must be tried with fire." Christ walks in the midst of the churches, "with his feet of fine brass, as if they burned "in a furnace, and all the churches shall know that he "searcheth

" ſearcheth the hearts and reins, to render unto every man " according to his works," Rev. i. 15. & ii. 18. 23. There muſt be fiery trials, temptations, and perſecutions, becauſe of the word; and by theſe every man's work will be tried of what ſort it is. The Lord himſelf is notably at work in every ſuch church of his, for the trial and diſcovery of hypocrites: and as the Apoſtle compares the church at Corinth to a huſbandry; ſo our Lord, making the like compariſon, ſhews us this trial of his diſciples, John xv. 1. 2.: and it is the ſame thing that the Apoſtle here calls " a trial by fire." Says our Lord, " I am the vine, and my Father is the huſ- " bandman Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he " taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he pur- " geth, that it may bring forth more fruit." This trial will be perfect at the ſecond appearance of Jeſus Chriſt. "Now," ſays the Apoſtle, " if any man's work," in this building of God, " ſhall abide the trial, as the gold, ſilver, precious " ſtones, abide the fire;" he ſhall " receive a reward" as a good workman, and ſhall have joy in his work: but if any workman build ſuch materials upon this foundation, laid in the church at Corinth, as will not abide the trial, like the " wood, hay, and ſtubble," that cannot abide the fire; he ſhall ſuffer the loſs of his labour: " And though he himſelf " may be ſaved," becauſe he held the foundation; yet it ſhall be " as by fire," like a man that hardly eſcapes in a burning, loſing all his effects.

What has been ſaid may ſerve for explication of the firſt thing in the propoſition, and for clearing our way to the other things in it. But before we proceed to them, we muſt notice, that unto ſuch a church or congregation of Chriſt do belong the infants of the members, who are pointed out to us, as, with any one of their parents, the objects of brotherly love: " For they are holy," 1 Cor. vii. 14. and they have right to baptiſm with their parents, by their parents profeſſion, Acts ii. 38. 39. Though yet it muſt be owned, that baptiſm is not confined to a memberſhip in any particular church; for we ſee ſuch baptized as were not yet members of any particular church, but only members of the catholic. The inſtance of the eunuch is very clear to this purpoſe, Acts viii. And baptiſm ſeems to have gone before adding unto a particular congregation of Chriſtians. We are baptized into the church-catholic, and not into any particular church, of whatſoever ſort or ſize, as many imagine; and from

from this imagination have proceeded uncharitable and unchriſtian controverſies about baptiſm

But the Lord's ſupper is an ordinance of communion in ſuch a congregation or church of Chriſt as has been deſcribed. It is the moſt high and eminent act of communion in ſuch a church, and therein the diſciples make the higheſt profeſſion of the one faith, which is in the blood of the Son of God; and of the catholic brotherly love toward one another, even as Chriſt hath loved them; and of the one hope, ſhewing forth the Lord's death till he come. This ordinance was always gone about in a congregation of diſciples; for there muſt be a viſible communion of diſciples in it. The church in Jeruſalem "continued ſtedfaſtly in breaking of bread." The diſciples at Troas "came together on the firſt day of "the week, to break bread," Acts xx. 7. The church at Corinth "aſſembled and came together in one place to eat the "Lord's ſupper," Cor. xi. And the Apoſtle there condemns them, for their not "tarrying one for another," for the want of brotherly love in ſetting about that great ordinance of communion, and becauſe the rich indulged themſelves at the love-feaſts, to the neglect of the poor. Very great corruptions indeed, but ſuch as were not abſolutely inconſiſtent with a ſtate of grace: for he tells them, for theſe things "they were judged, and chaſtened of the Lord, that they "might not be condemned with the world; and ſo many "were weak and ſickly among them, and many ſlept." And becauſe theſe abuſes were common in that church, and not confined to a few members, he ſolemnly warns and calls the whole body to reformation in this point, and that ſpeedily, leaving other things to be ſet in order till he ſhould come. It has been very ſurpriſing to ſee ſome men pleading, from this inſtance in the church at Corinth, for a ſettled, conſtant, impure communion of diſciples and no-diſciples in the Lord's ſupper. But paſſing this, we only notice a difference very obvious betwixt baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper. Baptiſm was adminiſtered to a ſingle perſon, upon the ſatisfaction of him that baptized, in the profeſſion of ſuch as were baptized with their infants. But there was ſtill a viſible communion of diſciples, profeſſing mutual brotherly love in Chriſt, and all ſatisfied in one another as diſciples, in the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. x. 16. 17.

II. We proceed now to conſider, what ſhould be underſtood by "the presbytery of a church, or congregation of Jeſus "Chriſt."

And

And here we may obſerve, that all church-office under Jeſus Chriſt, the only head of the church, was at firſt in the hands of the apoſtles, who were employed in the firſt ſetting up, and laying the plan of goſpel-churches. So ſoon as they, by the preaching of the goſpel, made diſciples of Chriſt in Jeruſalem, and joined them together, they exerciſed all church-offices among them. They were deacons in that church; and when that became too burdenſome for them, ſome of the diſciples were ſet apart unto that office, after the manner of which we read, Acts vi. They were elders unto that church: For the apoſtles were alſo elders, 1 Pet. v. 1. and where ever they came, and aſſembled themſelves with any church, they acted therein as elders. When there was neceſſity for it, they alſo ſet apart ſome in the church at Jeruſalem unto the office of elders. So we read of elders in that church, Acts xv. and xxi. Even as Moſes, who at firſt had the whole ruling power in the church of Iſrael, under the Lord, in his hand, when that was found too weighty for him, did, at the divine direction, ſet apart the ſeventy elders, Numb. xi. and appointed other judges, which continued after the removal of that extraordinary officer appointed for the firſt ſetting up of that national church.

Thus we find, in the church at Jeruſalem, the elder, and the deacon, the only ordinary church-officers under the New Teſtament. There is no need of inſiſting to ſhew, that the guidance and government in churches belonged to the "elders of thoſe churches," Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 17. Neither ſhall we ſtay on that diſpute, Whether there were elders that only ruled or preſided in the church, and did not labour in word and doctrine? And it is needleſs to labour in ſhewing, that the New-Teſtament elder or presbyter and biſhop are the ſame thing. This has been abundantly ſhewed by many. But that which muſt be noticed here is, that there was in every church a company of theſe biſhops, or elders, or presbyters, Acts xiv. 23. "When they had ordained elders in every church." Such a company of elders was in the church at Epheſus, Acts xx. They were paſtors: For they are exhorted to "feed the flock;" and their buſineſs was "to take heed to themſelves, and to all "the flock over which they were overſeers," or biſhops. Of theſe elders that were in every church, there ſeem to have been more than one, perhaps many, in ſome churches, "labouring in the word and doctrine." And whatever may be ſaid as to the being of order in a church, yet unto the

well-being of it, more ſuch elders or biſhops than one ſeem neceſſary; elſe they would not have been ſet in the firſt churches And there is no ground in the New Teſtament for that ſaying, which afterwards became common, "One "biſhop and one church:" for at firſt every church had more biſhops. Now, the company of preſbyters, elders, or biſhops, taking heed to themſelves, and to all the flock, is the preſbytery of that flock, that congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt. Such a preſbytery was in the congregation at Jeruſalem, and ſuch a preſbytery was in the congregation at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. The Holy Ghoſt employed that preſbytery to ſet apart and ſend forth Paul and Barnabas to preach the goſpel through the world. And of no other kind was that preſbytery "that laid hands on Timothy," 1 Tim. iv. 14. A company of ſuch elders, placed in a church or congregation of Chriſt's diſciples, is in the beſt ſituation for ſpreading the goſpel. The light is then ſet on a golden candleſtick, Rev. i. 20. and ſo it ſhines round about. For as every member of ſuch a church is ſome way a witneſs for Chriſt, and much more all together, in their joint confeſſion of the faith of Chriſt; ſo they that labour among them in the word and doctrine are as a light ſet on a candleſtick, that it may ſhine to the world. When men are ſent out by ſuch a preſbytery to preach the goſpel in the world, or when the goſpel comes out from ſuch a church, it then goes forth in the moſt orderly regular way, and unto the beſt advantage: for thus it was at firſt ſpread through the world. So ſoon as it is ſucceſsful in any place where it comes, ſo as that there is a number of diſciples, then it is the duty of ſuch a church, with its preſbytery, to aſſiſt the diſciples there, in bringing themſelves into church-order, and furniſhing them with preſbyters or overſeers, Acts viii. 14. Acts xi. 22.—26.

The rule and government of this preſbytery, or elderſhip, in a church of Jeſus Chriſt, is not their own, but Chriſt's. "They are not lords over God's heritage." 1 Pet. v. 1 2. 3. "The elders which are among you, I exhort, who alſo am "an elder: — Feed the flock of God which is among you, "taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but willing-"ly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as "being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to "the flock." They that "labour in the word and doctrine," muſt not "preach themſelves," the lords of the diſciples, but "Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and themſelves their ſervants for "Jeſus ſake: Even as the Son of man came not to be mi-

"niſtred

" niſtred unto, but to miniſter, and give his life a ranſom for " many." Their proper power and authority over the flock goes as far as they are furniſhed and enabled by the Holy Ghoſt, for repreſenting the authority of the Lord Chriſt in his word unto them, and as far as they can manage that, with ſpiritual wiſdom upon their conſciences. He that has no meaſure of a gift of this ſort from Jeſus Chriſt, and has no ſkill in the application of his words and commandments unto the conſciences of them that profeſs ſubjection unto him, is no way fit to be an overſeer or preſbyter in one of his churches, which are free from the doctrines and commandments of men.

No company of elders can pretend to more power over the diſciples of Chriſt in a church, than the apoſtles had. And when we look to their adminiſtrations in the church at Jeruſalem, and other churches where they acted as elders, it does not appear, that they did any thing of common concern to the church, without the conſent of the multitude. Thus we have the Holy Ghoſt noting down to us the conſent of the multitude, before ſuch things were fully concluded and done. See an inſtance of this Acts vi. 1.——6. And even in that determination of the great queſtion by the apoſtles and elders Acts xv. we are told, ℣ 22. " It pleaſed the apoſtles and el- " ders, with the whole church" *. Yea, and it ſeems they thought it neceſſary to judge and determine in diſcipline in the preſence of the church, 1 Cor. v. 3. 4. 5.

But it is time now to inquire about the diſcipline of a church of Chriſt. Only let us firſt notice, with reſpect to this ſcripture-word *preſbytery*, that it has been treated the ſame very way, as the word *biſhop*. A biſhop at firſt was an overſeer of a flock or congregation of Chriſtians; but afterwards it came to ſignify a ruler over many preſbyters, and many ſuch flocks, as have taken place in later ages.

Juſt ſo, the ſcripture-preſbytery is the elderſhip of a congregation of Jeſus Chriſt, as has been ſaid; but, in proceſs of time, the word *preſbytery* has come to ſignify a company of elders gathered out of many pariſhes and ſeſſions, and having juriſdiction over thoſe ſeſſions and pariſhes; of which pariſhes and ſeſſions, and of which preſbytery, the ſcripture ſpeaks nothing. But thus have men ſet off their own contrivances with ſcripture-names, to make them well-pleaſing to themſelves, and recommend them to the world. So ſome,

* See Calvin upon the place.

when they find the word *biſhop* in the Bible, never queſtion but it is the dioceſan biſhop. And others, who have learned to know, that the ſcripture-biſhop is only the biſhop of a congregation; yet when they find the word *preſbytery*, they are ſure it is their modern preſbytery, having juriſdiction over many ſeſſions and congregations. But what will they do, if they cannot find ſeſſions in congregations under the juriſdiction of a common preſbytery? Why then, if ſeſſions be not to be found in the Bible, nor many congregations under a preſbytery, they muſt either give over troubling their heads with the Bible, and think as honeſt men and fathers have thought before them; or elſe they muſt reſt content with the preſbytery of a congregation, and ſay the ſame thing of the ſcripture-preſbytery that they uſed to ſay of the ſcripture-biſhop. But then they'll paſs under the name of *Independents* and *ſchiſmatics*; and perhaps be made to know, that the preſbytery can act the ſame part to them, to bring them to an orderly way of thinking, as the biſhop did to others before them.

III. Now we come to ſpeak ſomewhat of the diſcipline of a church of Jeſus Chriſt, having a preſbytery or elderſhip, taking heed to themſelves, and to all the flock over which they are overſeers.

On this head of diſcipline there has been much work about the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the binding and looſing ſpoken of by our Lord, Matth. xvi. 19. and Matth. xviii. 18. In the firſt of thoſe texts, what he ſays of the keys, and of binding and looſing, is ſpoken to Peter on occaſion of his making that notable confeſſion of the great fundamental truth of the goſpel concerning him, "The Chriſt, the Son of the "living God; upon which rock," in Peter's confeſſion, he ſays, "he will build his church, and the gates of hell ſhall "not prevail againſt it." This muſt chiefly be underſtood of the inviſible church, the whole body of Chriſt, no part of which can periſh. As to the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the binding and looſing ſpoke of on that occaſion, there is a diſtinction made betwixt the key of knowledge or doctrine, and the key of diſcipline; and ſo likewiſe betwixt binding and looſing doctrinally, and binding and looſing in a way of diſcipline *. And there is ſome foundation for this diſtinction: for there may be a binding and looſing doctrinally, where there is no manner of diſcipline. That text, Matth. xvi.

* See the Palatine catechiſm, qu. 83. 84. 85.

ſeems

ſeems chiefly to ſpeak of this doctrinal binding and looſing, as does John, xx. 23. But we cannot exclude the key of diſcipline in that place, and the binding and looſing in a way of diſcipline, which we have more largely and clearly ſpoken of Matth. xviii. 15.—18. which plainly ſpeaks of that which is commonly called *diſcipline*; and the church there is evidently a particular viſible church; "Tell it unto the church: but if "he neglect to hear the church." It cannot be the univerſal church that the offended brother is obliged to tell his brother's fault to, and the offending brother is to hear; but a particular viſible church, wherein they are concerned, and which they have acceſs to ſpeak to, and hear.

Now, it is obſervable, with reſpect to that fundamental rule of diſcipline laid down there by our Lord,

1. That the perſons concerned in the whole of this diſcourſe, from the beginning to the end of it, are the diſciples, the brethren, and they that are to be accounted of by us as believers in him. All theſe, from the greateſt to the leaſt of them, are concerned in this diſcourſe of our Lord: "Whoſo "ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which believe in me," ℣ 6. Other men, whom he diſtinguiſhes from them by the name of *the world*, are no farther touched in the whole diſcourſe than thus: "Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe;" and, "Wo to the world becauſe of offences." The rule of diſcipline here given by our Lord is clearly for the brethren: "If thy "brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee." See 1 Cor. v. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

2. It is alſo very remarkable, that this diſcourſe of our Lord, being occaſioned by the diſciples their propoſing this queſtion, "Who is the greateſt in the kingdom of heaven?" is intended againſt that pride and ſelf-ſeeking through which his diſciples would lord over one another, and from whence offences, perſecutions, wars, and fightings among them do flow. He preſſes humility and ſelf-denial, meekneſs, harmleſſneſs, and forbearance toward one another, and that in the moſt awful and moving manner; and vehemently preſſes a direction unto the mortification of this luſt of the fleſh, this wicked deſire of the mind, imported in the diſciples queſtion to him. "He ſet a little child in the midſt of them, and ſaid, Verily "I ſay unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as "little children, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of hea-"ven. Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this lit-"tle child, the ſame is greateſt in the kingdom of heaven. "—Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which be-

"lieve

" lieve in me, it were better for him that a millſtone were " hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth " of the ſea. Wo unto the world becauſe of offences: for " it muſt needs be that offences come; but wo to that man " by whom the offence cometh. Wherefore if thy hand or " thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from " thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, " rather than having two hands or two feet, to be caſt in- " to everlaſting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck " it out," *&c.*—" Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of " theſe little ones; for I ſay unto you, that in heaven their " angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in " heaven. For the Son of man is come to ſave that which " was loſt. How think ye? if a man have an hundred ſheep, " and one of them be gone aſtray—Even ſo it is not the " will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of theſe " little ones ſhould periſh." Take heed that ye deſpiſe not " one of the little ones" that believe in Chriſt: The angels of God are all miniſtering ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter unto them, to ſerve them; the Son of man came to ſave them when loſt, to miniſter to them, and give " his life a ranſom " for them, and rejoices in their ſalvation;" the Father is concerned in their ſalvation, deſpiſes not nor rejects them; is not careleſs about them, but delights in their ſalvation: " Take heed that ye deſpiſe not nor reject them, nor diſdain " to ſerve them." O! that this introduction unto the fundamental rule of diſcipline had been attended to always by them that have taken the management of church-diſcipline in their hands! And, conſidering what has fallen out in the world ſince under pretence of diſcipline, does not infinite wiſdom appear in introducing the matter of binding and looſing in diſcipline with ſuch a diſcourſe as this?

3. It muſt further be carefully noticed, that our Lord intends here, that tenderneſs of mutual brotherly love among his diſciples, and that their mutual edification in this love unto their ſalvation, to which that pride and ſelf through which they lord over, perſecute, deſpiſe, provoke, and envy one another, unto their mutual deſtruction, is entirely oppoſite. " Whoſo," ſays he, " ſhall receive one ſuch little child in " my name, receiveth me. But whoſo ſhall offend one of " theſe little ones, that believe in me," *&c.* " How think " ye? if a man have an hundred ſheep, and one of them be " gone aſtray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and " goeth into the mountains, and ſeeketh that which is gone " aſtray?

" aſtray? And if ſo be that he find it, verily I ſay unto you, " he rejoiceth more of that ſheep, than of the ninety and nine " which went not aſtray." See ℣ 21. 22. and from thence to the end of the chapter. Peter ſaid, " Lord, how oft ſhall " my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven " times? Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee, Until " ſeven times: but, Until ſeventy times ſeven. Therefore is " the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which " would take account of his ſervants.— Shouldſt not thou al- " ſo have had compaſſion on thy fellow-ſervant, even as I " had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered " him unto the tormentors, till he ſhould pay all that was " due unto him. So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do " alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every " one his brother their treſpaſſes." Suitable to our Lord's great ſcope in this chapter, where the rule of diſcipline is laid down, are theſe exhortations of the Apoſtle, Rom. xii. 9. 10. 16. " Let love be without diſſimulation.— Be kindly " affectioned unto one another, with brotherly love, in ho- " nour preferring one another — Be of the ſame mind one " toward another. Mind not high things, but condeſcend " to men of low eſtate. Be not wiſe in your own conceit." Gal. v. 26. & vi. 1. 2. " Let us not be deſirous of vain glo- " ry, provoking one another, envying one another. Bre- " thren, if a man be overtaken in a fault,— reſtore ſuch an " one in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt " thou alſo be tempted. Bear ye one anothers burthens, " and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt." Eph. iv. 1. 2. 3.—" Walk " worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all " lowlineſs and meekneſs, with long ſuffering, forbearing one " another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the " ſpirit in the bond of peace," Phil. ii. 1.—5. See alſo to this purpoſe what our Lord ſays on this ſame ſubject record- ed by the other evangeliſts, Mark ix. from ℣ 23. to the end. " Have ſalt in yourſelves, and have peace one with another." Luke ix. 46.—50. and xvii. 1.—5.

Now, ſeeing our Lord plainly intends the maintaining of this brotherly love among his diſciples, in giving this rule with reſpect to binding and looſing, it is plain they muſt all have a hand in it, and it cannot be tranſacted without them. The treſpaſs that he ſpeaks of in our brother is ſuch as may give us juſt ground to ſuſpect him, or may cool our brotherly love to him, and our dealing and the church's dealing with him is for gaining him, and for his recovery and edification in

in love. If he continue obstinately in his trespass, and hear not the church, he discharges us from the duties of brotherly love to him.

4. We may likewise notice, that in this great matter of binding and loosing, the disciples must meet together "in the "name of the Lord Jesus;" not in their own names. It is his business they are doing, not their own: and it must be done by agreement, not through strife, or by parties overruling one another, Jam. iii. from ℣ 13. to the end. And further, it must be managed by "the word and prayer," the proper weapons of the church. It must not be carried on with worldly wisdom, which defiles the temple of God; and as to which a man must "become a fool, that he may be wise," 1 Cor. iii. 16.—19. Neither is there any worldly power in this discipline, or belonging to it. Human laws, with civil sanctions, have no place here; but the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, in whose name the thing is done, 1 Cor. v. 4.

"If he will not hear thee.——If he neglect to hear the "church. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall "agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, "it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, "there am I in the midst of them."

Now, this discipline consists, 1. In the admitting or receiving of the disciples into the church, in the censuring of offending brethren unto excommunication, and in absolving the penitent, Matth. xviii. 5. Acts ii. 41. Matth. xviii. 15. 16. 17. 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. 6. 7. 8. 2. Unto this discipline is also reckoned the admitting and setting apart of men to bear office in the church, and the setting of them aside. As to the first of these, we have an instance of it, Acts vi. in the ordination of the first deacons in the church at Jerusalem; where we see what is the people's part, and what is the part of the eldership, in that matter. We have also an account of the setting apart of a disciple to bear office among the apostles in the room of Judas. There was something there extraordinary; as, the qualifications of the person, and the casting of lots; because it behoved the apostolic call to be immediate. But there was something in that transaction agreeing with the ordination of ordinary officers, and which serves for a precedent. See Acts i. 16. 21. 22. 23. We have not such a particular account of the ordination of elders in a church. We hear of the setting apart of Paul and Barnabas to preach the gospel through the world, by the presbytery at Antioch;

Antioch; and of Timothy to the work of an evangeliſt, by the "laying on of the hands of the preſbytery" of ſome other church: but of the ſetting of elders in a church we have not an account ſo particular. Only, from Acts xiv. 23. we may gather, that they were ſet apart to their office, after the ſame manner as the deacons, Acts vi. Conſidering what has happened in after-ages about ordination, (the holding of ſome for miniſters, becauſe they have been brought through ſome forms, without being qualified for that office by Jeſus Chriſt, or accepted by his people; and the rejecting of others qualified by Chriſt, and accepted by his diſciples, becauſe they have not paſſed through all the forms that ſome men judge neceſſary), it may be conceived, that there is a providence in the ſcripture's ſpeaking not ſo full and clear about ſome things in their ordination. The moſt ſucceſsful miniſter that ever was in Scotland, Mr Robert Bruce, never received, nor would admit of the very ſcriptural ceremony of "laying on of hands *," in his ordination to the miniſtry; but he was notably furniſhed by Chriſt, and obliged in his conſcience to uſe his talent, and was heartily accepted by the diſciples, and had his miniſtry "crowned with ſucceſs."

As to the ſetting aſide of church-officers, particularly falſe teachers, we have a general rule to the elders at Epheſus, "to take heed to themſelves as well as to the flock;" and the diſciples are commanded to "beware of them," and not to "hear them," or "receive them." And we may find excommunication, the cenſure common to them with other diſciples, inflicted on them: but of that which goes now under the name of ſuſpenſion or depoſition, we have no inſtance nor example in all the word of God, nor any rule laid down for it further. And yet we have heard ſome, in a fever of national zeal, crying out, that ſuſpenſion is God's great ordinance, which they were highly bound in conſcience to obſerve, and which they reckoned other mens conſciences could not eaſily withſtand.

IV. There remains yet a fourth thing in the propoſition, which deſerves ſerious conſideration; and it will be the clearer unto us, that we have conſidered what is alledged on the foregoing heads.

If Jeſus Chriſt hath ſubjected a congregation of his, with its preſbytery, in its diſcipline, unto any juriſdiction under heaven, the propoſition is falſe, and muſt be rejected; if he

* See the firſt book of diſcipline.

hath not, then it is clear and manifeſt: therefore the ſcripture muſt be carefully ſearched upon this head; and till ſomething be produced from thence to make it appear, that he hath ſubjected a church of his in this matter, unto any juriſdiction under heaven, the propoſition muſt hold good.

But ſome things may be ſaid from the ſcriptures, which may ſerve to manifeſt the truth of the propoſition to them that take to themſelves no other rule in theſe matters but the word of God.

If we look through all the inſtances of diſcipline recorded in the word, we ſhall find, if we have conſidered what is before ſaid, they went not beyond a congregation and its preſbytery.

The ſame thing appears from the fundamental rule of diſcipline, of which we have been ſpeaking, Matth. xviii. 15. to 20. It is thus: "If thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, "go, and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if "he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if "he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two "more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every "word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear "them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear "the church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and "a publican. Verily I ſay unto you, Whatſoever ye ſhall "bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye "ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven. Again I ſay "unto you, That if two of you ſhall agree on earth, as "touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for "them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or "three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the "midſt of them."

Much duſt has been raiſed to obſcure theſe plain words; and odd ſhifts have been made about the import of the word *church* here. But it is plain, that our Lord gives here a ſtanding rule for diſcipline among his diſciples, in the kingdom of heaven, unto the end of the world; and that the import of the word *church* muſt be taken from the apoſtles, who have more fully laid open to us the words "that began "to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf," in his miniſtry on the earth. We have already noticed, that a church-repreſentative, as it is called, is an utter ſtranger to the apoſtolic ſtyle and way of writing; and we have heard the account they give of a viſible particular church. It is alſo very plain, that our Lord ſpeaks here of a particular viſible church, before which

which the brethren may bring their cauſe, and which the treſpaſſing brother muſt hear: ſo that we can be in no great ſtrait to underſtand what is meant by the *church* in that notable text; and ſo to underſtand where the power of this binding and looſing is lodged. But after the offending brother has neglected to hear the one or two more, where goes the offended brother next to tell his treſpaſs? Is he at firſt to leap over the congregation whereof he is a member, with its preſbytery? Or is his firſt ſtep beyond that? No, this cannot be ſaid. And where ſhould he go next? Or if the other brother judge himſelf leſed, where ſhould he go for redreſs? No where that our Lord ſpeaks of, but heaven.

Without queſtion, the congregation of which the two brethren are members, and wherein they have been walking together in brotherly love and communion, with the preſbytery of that congregation, their immediate overſeers, are the fitteſt of any to determine in this matter. And our Lord is very particular in telling the ſteps that the offended brother is to take: "Tell him his fault; take with thee one or two "more; tell it to the church." But there it lands, and further it goes not, if the treſpaſſer hear not the church. Yet it is pleaded, that becauſe the offended brother muſt go firſt to the treſpaſſer, and he muſt hear him; and then to the one or two more, and he muſt hear them next; and then to the church; therefore, by parity of reaſon, there muſt be a going from inferior to ſuperior church-judicatures. But better reaſon requires, that Chriſt's ſervants ſhould ſtop where he would have them ſtop; and what he takes wholly in his own hand, no judicature on earth can take from him. He alſo is wiſe, and foreſaw all the conſequences that we have ſeen or can ſee; and he knew beſt what is for his own glory, and the unity and peace of his people, and the advancement of his kingdom: "For what can the man do that cometh after "this King?"

The account we have of the firſt churches ſet up by him after his aſcenſion, as patterns to all that ſhould follow after, is altogether agreeable to this. They were no more but congregations, as has been ſhewn, and they had every one their own preſbytery: they bound and looſed in a way of diſcipline, 1 Cor v. 2 Cor. ii. And they are not ſubjected herein unto any juriſdiction, but that of Chriſt in heaven, who alſo is in the midſt of them that are duly gathered in his name. Therefore when the apoſtles ordained elders in every church, and left them, they did not commend them to the care of any ſuperior judicature,

or to the care of a diocesan bishop, or many bishops joined together, and having a common oversight and jurisdiction over them: but commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed, as now wanting nothing to complete their church state and order, Acts xiv. 21. 22. 23. Tit. i. 5. To the same purpose we may observe, how Paul takes his leave of the elders of Ephesus, when he tells them, he should see them and that church no more, Acts xx. He commends the flock to their diligent care, and calls them to "take heed to "themselves;" but not a word of a superior judicature; not an insinuation of an advice to have recourse to it, or to any thing of that kind; but to "the Lord," and to "the word of "his grace." And yet he forewarns them of that very case, for which some men judge a subordination of judicatures absolutely necessary. He tells them, that, after "his departing, "grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing "the flock;" and that of their ownselves "men should arise "speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after "them." Here was occasion to speak of a superior judicature, if the Lord Jesus had seen occasion for it. And what remedy does his Apostle propose for it? Not that which man's wisdom judgeth best, but a remedy very agreeable to the spirit of the gospel, and the mind of Christ. "Take "heed," says he, "unto yourselves, and to all the flock. "——For I know this, that after my departing shall grie-"vous wolves," &c. "Therefore watch; and remember, "that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn "every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I "commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, "which is able to build you up, and give you an inheri-"tance," &c. His discourse is well worth the considering to the end of it.

Binding and loosing is an ordinance of Christ; and if it be done agreeable to his word, in the way wherein he hath appointed it to be done, then it is also done by him in heaven: and we see he has left this matter in the hands of a congregation of his with its presbytery, with a promise of being in the midst of them; so that they have power from him to assemble in his name, and bind and loose, being therein made accountable to no other lord or lords but himself alone. Thus, every "dwelling-place of Mount Zion," every gospel-church, having its "pillar of the cloud and of fire," according to the prophecy, Is. iv. 5. as the national congregation had its "pil-

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" lar of the cloud and of fire," of old, has all power of discipline within itself.

Let us now see what is produced from the word with any colour against this. First, we are told of general rules laid down in the word, which must necessarily carry us beyond a congregation with our discipline. And what are these rules? They are these: " The spirits of the prophets are subject to " the prophets;" and, " Let all things be done decently and " in order," 1 Cor. xiv. 31. 32. 33. 40. But from that context, and the epistle, it is visible, these rules are laid down for a congregation meeting from time to time in one place, to prophesy, and hear prophesying, and to partake of the Lord's supper: and the Apostle tells them, " God is not the " author of confusion, but of peace," and this in all the churches of the saints. So that these rules can carry us no further than congregations or churches of saints.

Further, there has been much labour about that transaction which we have recorded Acts xv.; and that which some men intend at first to make out from thence is this: That, upon a division arising in a church, as in Antioch, which they cannot heal themselves, they should go out unto a council, who have power and authority to determine in the case, make decrees about it, and lay burdens on the disciples and churches. This is all that can be offered to be proved from that passage. From this, when they think they have made it evident, there are inferences made, and conclusions of this sort established, as having the stamp of divine authority upon them, *viz.* That there ought to be a national church, with a stated subordination of sessions, presbyteries, provincial and national synods, or general assemblies. Every body may see, it will take no few consequences to bring the stamp of divine authority from Acts xv. upon all this order and government of the church. And after all that has yet appeared from that passage of God's word, it will not carry us beyond a church or congregation of Christ with our discipline, nor shew us any jurisdiction over them in that matter.

For, 1. It has not yet been shown, nor can be, that there is any thing more in that matter, than an occasional submission, by the congregation at Antioch, unto " the apostles and " elders of the congregation" at Jerusalem, of a question, a point of doctrine, wherein they were the only fit persons to decide and determine. This point nearly concerned the practice of the Gentile disciples at Antioch, and throughout the world. They had received the gospel from out of the church at Jerusalem;

ruſalem; and ſome came from thence, teaching them, that circumciſion, and the keeping of the law of Moſes, was neceſſary unto their ſalvation; and made a diviſion among them. None were ſo fit to determine in this caſe as the elderſhip of the church at Jeruſalem, which conſiſted of Jews, and where were the apoſtles. The church at Antioch ſubmits it to them; but we do not hear of any point of diſcipline ſubmitted: and the apoſtles and elders determine in it, with the conſent of the whole church in Jeruſalem. So that, even until now, we have not got out among congregations; and ſuch a practice may take place to the end of the world among them.

2. Nor has it ever yet been ſhown, that this meeting at Jeruſalem, whatever it was, exerciſed any diſcipline over any church or church-member at that time. They condemned the doctrine of the falſe teachers, who troubled the diſciples with their words, and ſubverted their ſouls, and laid heavy burdens upon them with their doctrine. But did they ever exerciſe any diſcipline about them? Nothing like it: they leave that entire to the churches where they came, or where they ſhould enter: and there was nothing of it in the queſtion and caſe ſubmitted to them. Thus it holds true, for what appears from Acts xv. that Jeſus Chriſt hath not ſubjected a church of his, with its preſbytery, unto any juriſdiction in its diſcipline. And in this ſtate remained the churches of Chriſt till towards the end of the ſecond century, when ſynods and councils began to be held upon the controverſy about Eaſter; and theſe might have been as well unheld, for any advantage the churches had by them as to unity and peace. But thus uniformity, and impoſitions, and councils commenced; and how far the catholic unity and peace of the diſciples of Chriſt has been advanced by them, the experience of all ages will declare. Yet it muſt be owned, that they have been in ſome things uſeful, and that they might be tolerable, if they did not aſſume to themſelves that power which Jeſus Chriſt hath lodged elſewhere, "nor lay any bur-"den upon the diſciples," which it "did not ſeem good to "him to lay upon them."

Thus far we have been conſidering the ſenſe of the propoſition which was to be explained, and comparing it with the word of God, the only rule by which the truth or falſehood of it can be determined; and ſo we have had occaſion to take a view of the plan of a goſpel-church, laid down to us by Chriſt and his apoſtles. It is owned, that, in this view,

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it is not agreeable to the wisdom of this world, to which the whole of the true gospel of Christ is disagreeable; and that there may be many plausible reasonings against it, by them that are fond of that wisdom, as there are against all the parts of the gospel of Christ. But there are these things that may be said in the behalf of it.

1. It is the most agreeable to all conditions and circumstances wherein the church of Christ or his disciples can be in this world, especially to times of persecution; and persecution is the most ordinary lot of the disciples and true church of Christ in this world, Matth. xvi. 21.—26. Mark viii. 34. 2 Tim. iii. 12. 13. In the most peaceable times, when the powers of the earth are employed to divert the violent course of persecution, we are told, "the dragon will be making war "with the remnant of the woman's seed, that keep the com- "mandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus "Christ," Rev. xii. 16. 17.

2. It interferes the least of all with Cæsar's kingdom, and can give the least disturbance to the kingdoms of this world; and it is most agreeable to our Lord's account of his kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. The congregational frame, as it has been described from the word of God, is far less intangled with the matters of state in the kingdoms of this world, than any other frame of the church: and if the thoughts of Christ's disciples about the church were regulated by his word, their consciences would soon be freed from many intanglements they have come under by their principles about a national state of the church interfering with Cæsar's kingdom.

3. It is most agreeable to the spirit of the gospel, and to the strain of the New Testament, particularly to our Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, as has been shewed; and to what is so frequently said, in the word of God, against the pride and lordship of the ministry over God's heritage. If the plan of a gospel-church given in the New Testament had continued, Antichrist had never been. Therefore we find the Apostle, when warning the church of the Thessalonians of Antichrist, gives them this direction: "Therefore, "brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have "been taught, whether by word or our epistle," 2 Thess. ii. 15.

4. There is no other state of the church wherein all the disciples of Christ will more easily agree, when they take the word of God alone for their rule in this matter, and when other frames of the church which they are contending for are stripped

ſtripped of all the worldly privileges that attend them. Chriſt has pointed out to us in his word what is neceſſary in this matter, and what all contending parties muſt own to be neceſſary; but the diſputes, wars, and fightings, have been about things that man's wiſdom ſaw further neceſſary, as if his inſtitution of a goſpel viſible church had nor been ſufficient to anſwer all the ends for which he appointed it. But if we ſhould take that wherein all the contending parties of Chriſt's diſciples are agreed in this matter, it will be found to come neareſt to that which has been deſcribed.

5. There is no other ſtate of the church better for preſerving and propagating the truth of the goſpel, in the purity and power of it: therefore ſuch churches as we have been ſpeaking of, are compared, by the Lord himſelf, to golden candleſticks for holding the light. It is true, that thoſe of the congregational way in England did, to their great reproach, ſinfully graſp at ſecular power, and upon that project became one party of this world with the ſectaries; yet the doctrine of the goſpel has been preſerved in greater purity in thoſe churches than in other churches of another frame, if we take the preaching in them, and the profeſſion of the members, and not merely public ſubſcribed forms, as the rule of our judging in this caſe*. And truly a church of that nature, which hath been deſcribed, cannot be nor ſubſiſt without the word of the goſpel coming in power, and bringing forth fruit; and without the ſpirit of Chriſt enabling the members to confeſs, that Jeſus is the Lord. But it is eaſy to conceive how other kind of churches may be without this.

6. If this account of a goſpel-church be liable to no other ſort of objections but what might be made againſt the apoſtolic churches, and if it be chargeable with no other kind of conſequences but the ſame, or ſuch like, as attended them, Chriſtians may know what to think of it. What would ſome men have thought, of the gathering of churches out of a national church, that had once expreſs divine inſtitution, and out of the ſynagogues, if they had lived in thoſe days? Further, if we ſhall hear of no other kind of arguing againſt it, but the old Popiſh cant, about the imperfection or darkneſs of the ſcriptures, the authority of the church, fathers, and martyrs, the unity and order of the church, the dreadful

* See the preface to the faith and order of the congregational churches.

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ſchiſm of the reformers and reformed churches, and the invalidity of their call to the miniſtry, and of their ordination; Proteſtants will know what to think of it. And then, if Preſbyterians be obliged to have recourſe to the ſame ſort of tools againſt it wherewith they themſelves have been long annoyed by the Epiſcopal men, ſome Preſbyterians, at leaſt, may not be altogether at a loſs how to form their thoughts about it.

7. It cannot overthrow the national eſtabliſhment, which is by law. For, 1*ſt*, It cannot come in the place of it, as another conſtitution of a national church might do. There is nothing of pariſhes with ſeſſions, nor preſbyteries, ſynods, and general aſſemblies, in all this view of the plan of a goſpel-church given us in the New Teſtament. 2*dly*, The national church is not ſettled by law upon the foundation of God's word, but upon the inclinations of the people of the land, which this frame that has been deſcribed can never pretend to; or if it might any where, for ſome time, pretend to it, as in the caſe of a colony, it could not ſubſiſt long without a conſiderable variation from itſelf. Of all ways of eſtabliſhing a national church by law, that of this nation is the beſt; and it were to be wiſhed, that they who have the management of ſuch a church would attend to the bottom on which it ſtands, the *peoples claim of right*. This might at leaſt be a check upon them in the affair of perſecution.

Chriſt's inſtitution of a goſpel-church ſeeks no more for its taking place in the world, but the natural right of mankind, liberty of conſcience; and cannot be diſturbed by the powers of the earth, but by their breaking in upon that; which if they do, there is one above them, who can order things ſo, that his kingdom will be advanced in ſpite of all oppoſition, and in the face of perſecution, as we ſee in the perſecution of the church at Jeruſalem.

3*dly*, This national church has never meddled much with the buſineſs of communion in the Lord's ſupper, but left it to the miniſters in their ſeveral pariſhes; and the Confeſſion of Faith affords them ſome direction whom to admit to that ordinance, and whom to debar. The practice of ſuch of them as do not admit the whole pariſh, but ſome way attend to the principles of the Confeſſion in that point, is, in effect, a gathering of a communicating church out of a pariſh, which ſome men call a church. And if two or three miniſters in a country ſhould admit none to that ordinance but proper objects of brotherly love, and join their communicants together with their own conſent, and overſee them unto the maintain-

ing of communion in brotherly love among them all, and unto their edification in that love, (while in all other things relating unto the parish order, they submit to the presbytery, and are accountable to it), this would come pretty near unto the scriptural account of a gospel-church; and if they that manage the national church could bear it, as they bear with meetings for prayer, it is not easy to see the harm it could do to their church. But if men will still urge an inconsistency betwixt this national church and the institution of Christ, and by any means make them incompatible, and so proceed to persecute all of that way, then we may know what to do "for delivering our own souls," Rev. xviii. 4. Jer. li. 6. and l. 8. and must change our thoughts of the national church, that hitherto has been stated in opposition to Antichristian tyranny.

And this may serve for clearing, how far a practice suitable to the proposition may take place under the present establishment, or without prejudice to it. If any want to be further satisfied on this head, they may see what is said upon it by the compilers of the faith and order of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy 1658. They speak thus in their account of the institution of churches, and the order appointed in them by Jesus Christ, par. 14. "However, they "who are engaged in the work of public preaching, and en- "joy the public maintenance upon that account, are not "thereby obliged to dispense the seals to any other than such "as (being saints by calling, and gathered according to the "order of the gospel) they stand related to as pastors or "teachers; yet ought they not to neglect others, living "within the parochial bounds; but, besides their constant "public preaching to them, they ought to inquire after their "profiting by the word, instructing them in, and pressing "upon them (whether old or young) the great doctrines of "the gospel, even personally and particularly, so far as their "strength and time will admit."

Some considerations that prove, that communicating with persons that receive unworthily, doth not make a person an unworthy receiver.

1. "EVery man shall bear his own burden," Gal. vi. 5. If another be wicked, how can his wickedness unsettle my faith, or disorder my devotion, except I consent

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to his impiety, or suffer myself to be enticed by it? He that is free from the other's offence, shall be freed also from the penalty due to the offence, and then what hurt can I receive from an ill man's communicating in my company? Why should I share in his guilt, when I both abhor it, and keep myself from the infection? "The soul that sins shall die" is God's standing rule. If therefore I approach with a practical faith, and another with unbelief, or, which is all one, with a "faith without works," shall his "unbelief make the faith "of God of no effect?" Rom. iii. 3.

2. What hurt did the guests receive at the wedding-feast, Matth. xxii. 11. 12. by eating with the man who had no "wedding-garment?" Were they rejected by the master of the feast, because they feasted in his company? No; all that came adorned with a suitable temper, and in whose "spirit there was no guile," received the caresses of the King, and none but the profane wretch felt the thunder of the Prince's anger: As he was singular in his sin, so was he singular in his punishment. The master doth not so much as frown upon the rest, doth not so much as give them an angry word; nor doth he expostulate with them, why they did bear him company? They charitably believed he was a good man, because he was invited with them.

3. If I see another man, whom I know to be or to have been a notorious sinner, sit down by me at this holy table, he must not therefore be an object of my scorn, but of my pity and compassion. I can make an excellent use of seeing him in my company: for I can pray for him, and beg of God, that he would overawe his spirit with a sense of the death of Christ, and strike him into repentance and humiliation; I can intreat my heavenly Father to give him a sight of the error of his ways; I can pray, that his sight of the bleeding Jesus may work upon his soul, and fill his heart with holy compunctions, and his eyes with tears; I can pray, that, after this communion, he may take heed and sin no more: and where I do so, I do at once exercise my pity, and raise mine own devotion; and this, sure, cannot make me an unworthy receiver.

4. Who hath given me a key to other mens hearts, whereby I can judge, at the receiving of the sacrament, that my neighbour receives unworthily? How do I know, but that he who was vicious a week ago, may become a penitent that day? or, who assures me, that he who cast God's laws behind him yesterday, may not this day cry out, "O wretched man

" that I am!" Who bids me trouble my head about another's receiving, when I have enough to do with mine own heart? and, while I give myself liberty to judge another, is it not a very great sign that I am not very sensible of mine own vileness? If I give myself to censoriousness at such times, I lose my charity and humility; and if the rule be, to esteem others better than ourselves, I do not very heartily obey that precept, while I suffer my mind to dwell upon other mens faults and errors. Christianity bids me have humble thoughts of myself; and if I think that all that receive with me may be, for ought I know, better than myself, I assuredly prepare for God's favour, who ever " gives grace to the " humble."

5. If Judas the traitor was present at this sacrament, as well as the other apostles, and his being present did not make the rest unworthy receivers, why should I think, that a wicked man's coming with me to this table should make me one? That Judas was present at the sacrament, we have the concurring testimony of three evangelists; for they all confess, that Jesus " sat down with the twelve to the eating;" and while they were eating, Jesus administered the holy sacrament unto them. And whereas it is objected, that the sacrament could not have been conveniently administered if the traitor had been present; that is a supposition which contradicts the matter of fact recorded by the evangelists; and who can judge so well of the conveniency or inconveniency of things as Christ himself? If Christ thought it convenient to give it him, who can say it was not so? Nor could the disciples be much surprised at it, when they had so often heard their master say, that " the tares and the wheat must grow together " until the harvest," and that the " kingdom of heaven," or the church-militant, " was like a net, containing good fish " and bad;" and though the words of Christ used in this sacrament, " This is my body, which is given for you," and, " This is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for " you, for the remission of sins," cannot be directly applied to Judas; yet, since these blessings are promised conditionally in other places of scripture, they might belong to Judas conditionally, in case he repented, or " brought forth fruits meet " for repentance," as they belonged to the other disciples absolutely, because their hearts were sincere and without hypocrisy. Nor is it strange that Christ should say, in the presence of Judas, " I will not henceforth drink of the wine, " until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom;" for

for there is nothing more common in the writings of the apoſtles, when they addreſs themſelves to a whole church, than to apply to them in general the promiſes of the goſpel, though true believers only have a right to them; and therefore, when Chriſt ſpoke theſe words to the diſciples, Judas being preſent, it was enough that they belonged to the major part of them, and thoſe that were qualified for that mercy might appropriate it to themſelves. But it is uſually pleaded, that if Judas was preſent at this ſacrament, yet ſtill he had a good outſide; he was far from being a ſcandalous ſinner, ſo that the congregation could not be offended. But this argument is of no weight at all: for, whether he were a ſcandalous ſinner or no, as long as Chriſt had declared him a devil and a traitor, it was as much as if he had been a ſcandalous ſinner; and the diſciples might be as confident of it, as if they had ſeen him run into exceſs of riot: ſo that Judas being preſent at the ſacrament, and his preſence not interfering with the worthy receiving of the other diſciples, it follows, that another man receiving unworthily, cannot make us, that come with ſuitable virtues, unworthy receivers. And yet, after all this, I would not be underſtood, as if ſcandalous ſinners were not to be ſeparated from this holy table, by thoſe whoſe office it is to forbid and hinder them; but then it is fit withal that the church ſhould excommunicate ſuch perſons firſt, that there may be a mark ſet upon them, whereby we may know them to be ſo, and avoid their company. If the church, either by reaſon of the multitude of ſuch ſinners, or for want of ſufficient information, cannot, or through neglect doth not, a private Chriſtian is not therefore to be ſcandalized at ſuch perſons when they come to the ſacrament, nor think himſelf therefore an unworthy communicant becauſe ſuch are preſent, there being no public mark ſet upon them, whereby he is authoriſed not to eat with them.

The LETTER written in anſwer to the preceding paper.

SIR,

AT your deſire I have conſidered the paper you ſent me, containing ſome conſiderations that prove, that communicating with perſons that receive unworthily, doth not make a perſon an unworthy receiver.

For

For my part, this anſwer might be ſufficient, That I agree with the propoſition which is laid down to be proven: for, in the pureſt external communion that can be expected in a viſible church, there will be hypocrites, fooliſh virgins with the wiſe, Matth. xxv. from the beginning, and branches in Chriſt not bearing fruit, John xv. from the beginning. Theſe may receive unworthily, though they be not diſcerned ſo to do by any beſides him "before whom all things are naked "and open." Their receiving unworthily is ſo far from making believers joined with them unworthy receivers, that it can in no wiſe touch them; ſeeing none but the ſearcher of the hearts can meddle with it. Real believers, not ſo ſcandalous as to be excommunicated from that ordinance of the ſupper, may receive unworthily; as appears from the Apoſtle's diſcourſe on that ſubject to the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. xi. For he ſpeaks of ſuch chaſtiſements as might befal juſtified perſons for their communicating unworthily: "When we are judged," ſays he, "we are chaſtened of the "Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world." And we cannot ſay, that partaking in the ſupper with a real believer, receiving unworthily, makes him that ſo partakes an unworthy receiver. Though yet, at the ſame time, it muſt be owned, that unworthy receiving, if it ſhall appear in them that we are bound to look upon as believers, and be tolerated in a church, will bring down divine judgments upon the church. Neither is communion with them that are not, by the law of Chriſt, to be looked upon as believers, ſcrupled at or refuſed, on this very account, that it makes them that hold ſuch communion unworthy receivers; but on the account of the nature of the ordinance, the communion that is proper to it, and ought therein to be held; and on the account of the command of Chriſt, forbidding communion with ſuch perſons.

It might be pleaded, that kneeling at the communion-table does not make him that ſo partakes an unworthy receiver; and yet Scottiſh Preſbyterians will not hereby juſtify that way of partaking: and ſome might perhaps contend, that partaking of the bread, if the cup ſhould be denied to the people, does not make the believer an unworthy receiver of the bread; yet no Proteſtant would by this juſtify himſelf in that way of receiving the Lord's ſupper.

If the author of this paper had ſeen meet to impugn the anſwer to the ſynod's query upon this ſubject, or what is advanced upon it in the Narrative, from p. 167. to p. 174. it might

might have ſerved better to clear this ſubject of difference, than the proof of a propoſition never denied by me.

But, upon a view of what is advanced in the proof of this propoſition, it would ſeem to me as if the author would have it thought, that we are not concerned with our fellow-communicants in the Lord's ſupper; and that to communicate with them that have no appearance of being diſciples of Chriſt, and are known to be wicked, cannot touch us at all in that ordinance. And if this be his ſcope, to make us eaſy with whom we communicate, I muſt differ from him; becauſe I ſee nothing in the word to give countenance to it, but very much againſt it.

I ſhall take a look of what he ſays on the five heads of argument, and conſider how far it ſerves to free us of all ſcruples at promiſcuous communion, and make us eaſy what they be with whom we communicate. And,

1. Is it ſo, That it belongs not to us to be ſatisfied, in the judgment of charity, concerning thoſe with whom we communicate; becauſe "every man ſhall bear his own burden?" If we look that context, we ſhall ſee, that as "every man "muſt bear his own burden" before the Lord, ſo it is the great duty of the diſciples of Chriſt to "bear one another's "burdens, and ſo fulfill the law of Chriſt," Gal. vi. 1.—5. Does not the new commandment of Chriſt oblige us to make a difference between the diſciples of Chriſt and the reſt of the world? to know them, do the peculiar duties of brotherly love to them, and to hold ſpecial communion with them our brethren "whom we have ſeen?" And is not this ordinance the higheſt inſtance of that communion, wherein the diſciples give the greateſt expreſſion of their love to one another? Are not we, in proving ourſelves and our own work, to have an eye upon this mark of love to our brethren whom we have ſeen, without which none of our works are good works, and without which we can "have no rejoicing in ourſelves?" See the firſt epiſtle of John. And is not every man "to bear "his own burden," with reſpect to this commandment of Chriſt, "at the laſt day?" See Matth. xxv. and 1 John iv. 17. 20.

I have heard it alſo alledged, "That becauſe we are called "to examine ourſelves, in order to our partaking of the "Lord's ſupper; therefore we are not concerned to inquire "about others, for making the judgment of charity about "them with whom we communicate." Yet, in that ſame context, the diſciples are called "to tarry one for another,

"that

"that they come not together unto condemnation;" and they are distinguished from other men, whom the Apostle calls "the world." This plainly imports, that they had to do with one another in coming together to eat the Lord's supper; and that every one of them was not to look to himself only, without regard to any other, or any concern to know whether they were communicating with disciples or infidels. And further, it is plain, that their want of the exercise of brotherly love to one another in coming together, appearing in their not tarrying one for another, and in the divisions that were among them, was one reason of their being chastened of the Lord, and of their coming together to condemnation. See 1 Cor. xi. from ℣ 17. to the end. If a man examine himself as he ought, he will see abundant reason in himself not to despise any of Christ's "little ones," and to make him judge charitably, and reckon himself "less than the least" of them; and this is an excellent mean to preserve from that pride and self-conceit which is inconsistent with brotherly love. But if we examine ourselves by the rules and marks laid down in the word of God, we shall find ourselves concerned to make a difference between the little ones that believe in Christ, and the world; and that we have much to do with them, in coming together with them "to eat the Lord's supper," that we have not to do with the world.

If a believer, joined in partaking of the ordinance, and in church-communion, with an open unbeliever or wicked person, do abhor his guilt, and keep himself from the infection, he does well; but it must be at least owned, he is not using the means appointed by Christ for that end; while he is yoked together in the most eminent part of Christian communion with that person, and is declaring himself "one bread" and "one body" with him, by partaking with him in that "one bread," which is the "communion of the body of "Christ;" and this after Christ has commanded him to turn away from such. See 1 Cor. chap. v. "Ye are puffed up, "and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this "deed may be taken away from among you. Your glorying "is not good. Know ye not, that a little leaven leaveneth "the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that "ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened," &c.

2. For what appears in the parable of the man among the guests wanting the wedding-garment, he is discerned by none but the all-seeing master of the feast, and might be the object of the brotherly love of the other guests, who might be approved

proved in the exercise of this love toward him as a suitable object of it, and yet he himself bear his own burden. The ground of their charity toward him could not be, that he was an object of the gospel-call; for so were they that were invited and would not come; but that he appeared to them to give obedience to it, and joined himself with the guests, appearing to be a guest, and a partaker of the heavenly calling. Many such objects of brotherly love will be found by the master of the feast at length to want the wedding-garment. But if our charity be to go upon a man's being invited by the gospel-call unto fellowship with Christ and his people, then there will be as many objects of brotherly-love as there are hearers of the gospel; and all to whom the gospel is preached might, without more, partake of the Lord's supper; which must be a great absurdity with them that are of the principles professed in the church established by law.

3. Without question, a notorious sinner is not to be the object of our scorn, but of our pity and compassion; and there are duties of benevolence and compassion, suitable to the gospel, to be done toward that man: but is this to be our work about our fellow-communicants in partaking with them in that bread and cup? Be this exercise about the notorious sinner what it will, it is not communicating; and if I be not otherwise employed in that ordinance, I am not communicating at all. If I should pray that the Lord's supper may be a mean of conversion to such a sinner, I know not if I would be praying in faith: for that ordinance is no mean of Christ's appointment for that end. The preaching of the gospel of Christ at a communion-table, (though that be not a proper way of doing it), may be a mean of conversion to a notorious sinner, and a mean also of edifying a believer; but hearing the gospel, though it be in faith, and communicating, are two very distinct things. An onlooker, that is not partaking in the bread and cup, may perceive a representation of a crucified Christ in that blessed bread and cup, wherein he sees others partaking, and perhaps may be very much affected with it; but it cannot be said, that this person is communicating in the Lord's supper: and if there be no more but this in the case of a person sitting at the table, and eating the bread and drinking the wine, without having any thing to do therein with his fellow-communicants, I very much question if that person be communicating at all. We cannot expect that he who never "saw Christ," or "believed" in him as exhibited to all in the preaching of the gospel, will "dis-

" cern the Lord's body" in the ſupper as ſet forth there only to diſciples, to be diſcerned by them in their partaking of it together as one body, for the confirmation of their faith and love, and for " ſealing believers unto the day of redemption." We are not to deſpiſe, but pity and pray for a company of Infidels, Jews, Mahometans, or Heathens: but would it be lawful for us to partake with them in the Lord's ſupper (ſuppoſing them to be ſome way or other compelled to it) till we ſhould be ſatisfied of their converſion? or could we in that caſe exerciſe communicating graces with reſpect to them? And if we compare the condition of theſe infidels with that of infidels going under the Chriſtian name, and claiming intereſt in the Chriſtian privileges, we may come to find the other ſort of infidels having, in ſeveral reſpects, the better of them.

4. Chriſt has kept the key of hearts in his own hand; but, by his new commandment, he has injoined his diſciples the knowing and acknowledging of the proper objects of that peculiar brotherly love; elſe that his commandment would be in vain. For, if thoſe whom he commands us to love with this love, cannot be known by all his diſciples, diſtinguiſhed from others, to what purpoſe is this his commandment unto all the diſciples? And though he hath not given any of them the key to mens hearts, yet he hath pointed out to all, in his word, the objects of this brotherly love, with whom he commands us to hold communion, and thoſe from whom he commands us to turn away. Communicants muſt be the objects of this love, and we muſt know ſo much concerning them with whom we communicate, before we eat of that bread and drink of that cup with them: and ſo we have no occaſion for troubling ourſelves, in communicating, with cenſoriouſneſs, and dwelling upon one anothers faults; but we rather thus come together, every one of us fearing concerning himſelf, leſt he be the only perſon in all the company whom the Lord ſhall find wanting the wedding-garment.

As to what is ſaid of preparing for God's favour, by humble thoughts of myſelf; it is an unguarded expreſſion, that may be taken in a ſenſe very derogatory to God's grace, and there may be much abominable pride in applying after this manner for God's favour in that ordinance.

However, it is ſafer to hold by the ſcripture way of ſpeaking: " He reſiſteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble; " and if we would judge ourſelves, we ſhould not be judged."

5. As

5. As to Judas's communicating, see Gillespie, and what he says against Judas's being a partaker in the Lord's supper. Yet let us suppose, that Judas "did eat of that bread, and "drink of that cup;" was not Judas then such a person, in the eyes of the disciples, that when the Lord told them, "one "of them should betray him," they suspected every one himself rather than Judas? And though the Lord had told them before, that one of them was a devil; yet none of them, for ought we hear, suspected Judas, or could know, from any thing that our Lord said, that it was he, till such time as he had received the sop, and immediately he went forth; so that the dilciples were called to no further communion with him, after he was thus discovered to the beloved disciple. Our Lord, who alone knew their hearts, knew from the "beginning who should betray him." Notwithstanding this, he made him an apostle. No man would by this justify our setting apart of one to the ministry, whom we know certainly to be a devil and a traitor: neither will his admitting him to the supper, (which it can never be shown that he did), who, before his all-seeing eye, was a devil, give ground to his disciples to admit those, or to communicate with those, whom they know to be such, judging by what appears to man's eye. Our Lord, in giving the supper, acted as the prime minister of the New Testament, giving a pattern to his ministers to follow in that matter; and none of them can copy after him in his omniscience. He hath not given them the key to mens hearts, but reserved it to himself, and left them to judge by what appears to them, according to his word.

The net, containing good and bad fish together, may some way answer unto the case of Judas's being among the disciples. That parable speaks of people gathered out of all nations into fellowship together, by the influence of the gospel; and not by such influence as has made many pass under the Christian name, that never felt any thing of the power of the gospel gathering them with the people of Christ, unto the great reproach and dishonour of that name, which at first belonged to none but disciples, made so by the hand of the Lord with the gospel, and gathered together by means of the gospel, upon an appearance of the grace of God in them. See Acts xi. 19.——26. But there is another thing intended in the parable of the tares and the wheat; as is to be seen in the letter published by Walker.

As to what is said of the words of the institution: 1. I cannot approve of the style, speaking as if Christ's blood had been

ſhed conditionally for the remiſſion of ſins, and the condition repentance, with its fruits, and ſincerity; and as if Chriſt's blood, while ſaid to be ſhed for men conditionally, became abſolute to them that fulfill the condition of repentance and ſincerity. Neither can I think, that thoſe who are pleaſed with ſuch a ſtyle will be able to maintain, that all ought to partake in the Lord's ſupper, to whom they think that may be ſaid conditionally, "This blood was ſhed *for you*, for "the remiſſion of ſins;" for that, they think, may be ſaid to all mankind, without exception. 2. Neither am I ſatisfied in what he ſays of the apoſtles ſpeaking of the major part in the churches: for I cannot be certain, that the major part in theſe churches were true believers and ſincere penitents; or, if he will have it, that the major part in theſe churches were real believers. What manner of churches, then, were they? It is not eaſy to ſuppoſe, that a church made up according to the ſcope of this paper, will conſiſt, for the moſt part, of real believers. I have better ground to think, that the apoſtles ſpeak not of them, as ſeeing their hearts, and finding the major part real believers; but in the judgment of charity, upon the outward evidence they all gave "of faith "in the Lord Jeſus, love to all the ſaints," and the Chriſtian hope. Sure the Apoſtle ſpeaks not of the major part of the church of the Theſſalonians, 2d Epiſt. i. 3. If we look to the two prime Chriſtian churches, Jeruſalem, the firſt of the Jews, and Antioch, the firſt of the Gentiles, we ſhall ſee of what ſort of perſons they were made up, and that there was no ſearching of hearts in the caſe, but a poſitive judgment of charity upon what appeared. And certainly the firſt of a kind is a very good rule for all that follows of the ſame kind. See Acts ii. 37. 40. 41. 42. and Acts xi. from ỳ 19. to the end. According to this judgment of charity, this could have been ſaid of Judas, and the diſciples could all have held communion with him upon that footing. As for what appeared about him to the omniſcient eye, the diſciples had nothing to do with that; and our Lord gave not his ordinance after the rule of his omniſcience, and his judgment thereby, but in ſuch a manner as might be imitated by his ſervants in all ages. Yet, for my part, I ſee nothing that ſhould move me to think, that Judas was a partaker in that ordinance. There appears to me no ground for ſuch a thought in the evangeliſts. And by what is above ſaid, you may perceive how little ground there is for all this noiſe about Judas, even ſuppoſing him to have been a partaker.

After

After all that the author of this paper has said to the contrary, he is still for a separation in this matter of communion in the Lord's supper; but he leaves the marks in the dark, as a secret to be kept among the clergy, to whom he commits the whole affair: so that we are to forbear communion with none in the Lord's supper but such persons as have a public mark set upon them by them, authorising us not to eat with them; and if they neglect to do their duty, in separating from that holy table such as ought to be separated from it, there is nothing left to the people in that case, but to follow them, and hold communion in that ordinance with as many as they think fit to admit. But seeing the author of this paper is against the admission of all to that holy table, I would desire to know, if he hold this only as a common prevailing opinion, which he thinks reasonable, or if he himself be satisfied in the truth of it, upon scripture-evidence? And if he consider the scripture-evidence for it, I am mistaken if he do not find, that the people, the communicants, have a concern in it, and a duty incumbent on them about it, as to which they must be answerable to the head of the church, as well as their officers, and that they shall bear their own burden with respect to this, as well as they. I shall freely own to the author of this paper, that if the overseers of the communion of Christ's disciples would do their duty in this matter, the people would have no just ground of offence, and would be "transgressors of the law "of Christ" if they gave their overseers any disturbance in that matter, and so ought to be marked: "For God is not "the author of confusion," in the churches of the saints. And, on the other hand, if the overseers of the church openly neglect their duty in this matter, I reckon he must also agree with me, that the disciples of Christ have a judgment of discretion with respect to those with whom he commands them to "walk in brotherly love" and Christian communion, and those from whom he commands them to turn away, and withdraw themselves; and that it is in the power of none to oblige them to hold communion in the Lord's supper with any from whom he obliges them to withdraw.

We have had some considerations, on the one hand, tending to make us easy with whom we communicate, and to encourage us to continue in promiscuous communion in the Lord's supper; and there are also some considerations, on the other hand, that serve to satisfy us, that it is our duty to forbear communion in the Lord's supper with them that have

no

no appearance of being disciples of Christ, believers in him, and are not objects of that brotherly love required in the new commandment; and to withdraw, in that ordinance, from every brother walking in open notour disobedience to the commands of Christ, and to seek after such communion in that ordinance as the Lord requires in his word, and in his new commandment.

1. They that believe there is such a thing as Christian communion, and a visible communion of saints by profession, must acknowledge, that the Lord's supper is the highest instance of that communion. It is peculiarly designed for this beyond any other ordinance of worship in a visible church: for in our eating of that bread and drinking of that cup together, we have the clearest and most evident outward representation made to us of the glorious mystical union and communion in the body of Christ mystical. Our mystical union and communion with Christ is evidently set forth to the believer in this ordinance; so that the believer, in eating of that bread, and drinking that cup, may know the riches of that glorious mystery, John vi. 56. 57. "He that eateth my flesh, and "drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." And, at the same time, the mystical union and communion of the members of Christ, in him crucified, is evidently set forth to the believer in our partaking all of that one bread and cup. 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is "it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread "which we break, is it not the communion of the body of "Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: "for we are all partakers of that one bread." If it were not so, why might not the Lord's supper be given where there is but one to receive it, as well as baptism? Now, if it be so, that there is, in that ordinance, an outward representation made of the glorious mystical union and communion of the members of the body of Christ, how is that representation made to the believer, if it be not in the apparent members of Christ their partaking together in that one bread and cup of blessing? Thus they that partake together in the "cup of "blessing which we bless," and in that "bread which we "break," must look upon themselves, if they would discern what is set before them in the ordinance, as very nearly related to one another, even as one bread and one body; and this by their being all partakers of that bread and cup which is the communion of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Now, in a mixed communion of apparent members of the body

body of Chriſt, with them that have no appearance of being members of that body, this bleſſed repreſentation of the glorious union and communion in the myſtical body of Chriſt is deſtroyed; and further, we become as much one body and bread with them that appear not be members of Chriſt, as with them that do, as far as our partaking in that one bread can make us ſo: and how much this is conſiſtent with the nature of the ordinance, and the graces that ought ſuitably thereto to be exerciſed toward Chriſt, and toward one another, in it, we may ſee by what has been ſaid. This was the doctrine of the reformers. See the Palatine catechiſm, qu. 76. and 77.

" What is it to eat the body of Chriſt, and to drink his " blood that was ſhed?

" *Anſ.* It is not only with certain affiance of mind to lay " hold on the whole paſſion and death of Chriſt, and thereby " to obtain forgiveneſs of ſins, and life everlaſting*; but " alſo by the ſpirit of Chriſt, which dwelleth at one time both " in Chriſt and us, in ſuch ſort more and more to be united " unto his holy body†; that although he be in heaven and " we upon earth, yet, notwithſtanding, we are fleſh of his " fleſh and bone of his bone‡; and as all the members of " the body are quickened and governed by one ſoul, ſo are " we all by one and the ſame ſpirit ‖.

" *Queſt* 77. Where hath Chriſt promiſed, that he will as " certainly give unto the believer his body and his blood in " this manner to be eaten and drunk, as they do eat this " bread being broken, and drink this cup?

" *Anſ.* In the inſtitution of the ſupper, the words whereof " are theſe,— 1 Cor. xi. 23. 24. 25. 26. Matth. xxvi. 26. " 27. 28. Mark xiv. 22. 23. 24. Luke xxii. 19. 20. This " promiſe is repeated by Paul, when he ſaith,— 1 Cor. x. 16. 17."

2. We are ſolemnly called and encouraged by great promiſes, not to be " unequally yoked together, believers with " unbelievers, and to come out from among them, and be " ſeparated," 2 Cor. vi. from ℣ 11. to the end. Whatever wrong uſe has been made of this place by them that have,

* John vi. 35. 40. 47. 48. 50. 51. 52. 54. 58.

† John vi. 55. 56. 57. Acts i. 3. 21. 1 Cor. xi. 26. Col. iii. 1.

‡ Eph. v. 30. 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

‖ John vi. 57. & xv. 1.—6. Eph. iii. 16. & iv. 15. 16. 1 John iii. 24. & iv. 13.

upon

upon unſcriptural grounds, ſeparated from the miniſters and people of Chriſt, and have made up themſelves into ſects and parties, quite off from the Chriſtian catholic footing; yet we muſt think this word of the Lord has ſome ſenſe, and that herein we are called to ſomething, which would be of great advantage to us, if we ſhall comply with the call.

But the great queſtion is, What this yoking together, and this ſeparation, ſhould mean? Marriage it cannot be: for ſuppoſing a believer to be yoked together in marriage with a very groſs unbeliever, can it be ſaid, that it is the great duty of the believer to come out from and be ſeparated from the unbelieving yoke-fellow in marriage? But this is the caſe here, that they who are unequally yoked together, believers with unbelievers, are called to come out from among them, and be ſeparate. Civil communion it cannot be either: for ſeparation in this reſpect would be to go out of the world, or turn monks, and tranſgreſs many commandments of Jeſus Chriſt. The Apoſtle here refers to the prohibition in the law, of yoking an ox and an aſs together; and ſpeaks of ſuch a yoke, wherein believers ought not to be yoked with unbelievers, becauſe of the unſuitableneſs of theſe two ſorts of perſons for that ſame yoke: and this he aggravates in ſeveral expreſſions: "What fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with un-"righteouſneſs? What communion hath light with darkneſs? "and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? or what part "hath he that believeth, with an infidel? and what agree-"ment hath the temple of God with idols?" And the Apoſtle ſpeaks here of ſuch a yoke as believers ought not to be joined in with unbelievers, becauſe of the unfitneſs of unbelievers for that yoke: "Be not unequally yoked together "with unbelievers:——For ye are the temple of God; as "God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; "and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſepa-"rate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive "you." Further, This is ſuch a yoking together, ſuch a communion and fellowſhip, ſuch a having part with and agreement with unbelievers, as whereby the church at Corinth, the people of Chriſt joined in a church there, were ſtraitened in their own bowels; for it is given as a direction to them, for their enlargement, when ſtraitened in their own bowels, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;" ſo that it is a direction of the ſame ſort with that which was given in the 5th chapter of the 1ſt epiſtle, "Know ye not that

"a

" a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? purge out there-
" fore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." And as he is calling them there to clear their church-communion of such as were unworthy of it, so he does here. He had spoke of some among them that began to deny the resurrection of the dead, after they had professed the faith, 1 Cor. xv. and what he says here may point to them; but he extends his exhortation, and makes it more general, and calls for a separation betwixt believers and unbelievers; no doubt, such a separation as the Corinthians were able to make, who could not search mens hearts: and there may be also here some eye to the subject on which he insists, 1 Cor. x. 14.—22.; compare Rev. ii. 14. And now, what is that yoke, that communion and fellowship, wherein believers must be by themselves, and not with unbelievers, if it be not church-communion? And what part of Christian communion is it, wherein they must not be yoked with them, if it be not the highest instance of it, the Lord's supper? The assembly of divines at Westminster, in their confession, apply this text unto the subject of the Lord's supper; and they that have the utmost regard to the mind of that venerable body of men in all points, will not reckon this a false gloss upon the place. And if it shall be granted, as it cannot well be denied, that this place of scripture points to church-communion, then let us consider, whether this exhortation and solemn call, " Be not " unequally yoked," &c. be directed to the overseers of the church of Corinth only, or to every church-member. And I reckon we can be in no strait to find, that every Christian is concerned in it, and will find himself obliged to answer the call; and while he thinks of doing so, he had need to take heed to the direction given in the first verse of the following chapter. We might also observe, how the first converts answered that call, Acts ii. 40. " Save yourselves from this " untoward generation. They that gladly received the " word, were added: and they continued stedfastly in the apo-
" stles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and " in prayers."

3. Every one that professes the faith of the gospel, every disciple of Christ, is bound to have a conversation becoming the gospel; and it is the duty of the meanest disciple of Christ to study this. The Apostle earnestly exhorts the church at Philippi to this, Phil. i. 27. 28. " Only let your conversation " be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I " come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your

" affairs, that ye ſtand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, " ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel; and in nothing " terrified by your adverſaries." We plainly ſee wherein it is that the apoſtle deſires to find the converſation of the Philippians, and of all ſuch after them, appearing ſuitable to the goſpel: he tells us, it will " be becoming the goſpel," if they be " ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving toge- " ther for the faith of the goſpel, againſt the adverſaries of " it;" and that ſo as he may either ſee it, being preſent among them, or hear of it being abſent, and hearing of their affairs. So that we may obſerve, that it is the faith of the goſpel in the open profeſſion of it that he is ſpeaking of, and calling us to ſtrive for againſt the adverſaries. And while we contend for the faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, as it is diſtinguiſhed from nature's light, and oppoſed to the wiſdom of man in the things of God; and as it is diſtinguiſhed from the law of Moſes, and oppoſed to Judaiſm; are we not alſo bound to contend for it, as it is the moſt " holy faith, the faith " once delivered to the ſaints," Jude 3. 19. 20. in oppoſition to a carnal, worldly, ſenſual profeſſion of faith, no wiſe influenced by the ſpirit of Chriſt in the goſpel, nor attended with good works? Further, we ſee the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of an open ſtrife for the faith in the profeſſion of it, againſt open adverſaries; for it is only ſuch a ſtrife that he could ſee or hear of, being abſent, and hearing of their affairs. And he is not ſo much ſpeaking of a man's ſtriving alone in this place, as of a company of Chriſtians living together in a place, and ſtriving together in a body, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind ſtriving together, ſo as one being preſent might ſee, and being at a diſtance from them might know no otherwiſe but by report. And this was the church at Philippi. Let them that ſpeak much of a " converſation becoming the go- " ſpel," conſider this, that where there is not ſuch a ſtrife for the faith of the goſpel as this, there there is ſomething very conſiderable wanting to make out a " converſation be- " coming the goſpel." If there be no room nor place now for an open ſtrife for the faith of the goſpel of Chriſt in the profeſſion of it, as it has been deſcribed, then there is no place among us at this day for that " converſation becoming " the goſpel" of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in this text: but if there be, as no doubt there is every where, in every place where there are ſuch as thoſe to whom the Apoſtle writes this epiſtle; then, if theſe ſhall be yoked together in partaking of that bleſſed bread and cup, which is the communion of the

body

body and blood of Chriſt, and ſo become one bread and one body with them that cannot confeſs that faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, that "holy faith once delivered to the ſaints," and with the open adverſaries of that faith; might it not be thought, in that caſe, that the ſtrife of which the Apoſtle is ſpeaking is compoſed, and the fire that was kindled by the diſciples of Chriſt, in their being "joined in one ſpirit, with "one mind, ſtriving for the holy faith" of the goſpel againſt the adverſaries, is quenched and put out, now when the differing parties are joined together in the cloſeſt external bond of Chriſtian union and communion that can be thought of? And we need be at no loſs to ſee, if this exhortation be directed to the biſhops at Philippi only, or to all the ſaints there appearing ſo to be: and ſaints we muſt be, or no Chriſtians. Now, if you ſhall inquire, what we are contending for in this buſineſs about Chriſtian communion, particularly in the Lord's ſupper? our anſwer is, We are aiming at a "converſation becoming the goſpel," in ſtriving together for the holy faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, in oppoſition to a ſort of faith not influenced by the goſpel, not ſavouring of Chriſt, nor of his ſpirit, but dead, carnal, worldly, and fruitleſs, that paſſes under the name of the Chriſtian faith, and has come inſtead of the "faith once delivered to the ſaints." And "who is ſufficient for theſe things?" But the ſtrength of the Lord Jeſus is made perfect in weakneſs.

4. The exerciſe of brotherly love toward our fellow communicants is neceſſary unto a right partaking with them in the Lord's ſupper, and there is no more place for the exerciſe of this grace toward our brethren, whom we have ſeen at a communion-table, than there is any where elſe, if our fellow-communicants be not proper objects of this love. I need not add to what is ſaid on this ſubject in the Narrative; only, if I be to profeſs brotherly love to my fellow-communicants, as I ſeem to do in the moſt eminent manner when I become one bread and one body with them, I cannot do this without abominable hypocriſy and diſſimulation, if I look not upon them as the ſaints and faithful in Chriſt: and therefore I may ſay with the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of church-communion, "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as "ye are unleavened. For Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for "us. Therefore let us keep the feaſt, not with old leaven, "neither with the leaven of malice and wickedneſs, but with "the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth." But I have wearied myſelf, and I fear will weary you, and I am in haſte;

and therefore I shall only put you in mind of another consideration.

5. All the disciples of Christ are by him inclined to a peculiar fellowship with their brethren; and it is very agreeable to the new nature in real believers to seek after separate Christian fellowship: therefore you have heard a great complaint of promiscuous communion in the Lord's supper among them from time to time. If they have been conscientiously dissatisfied with it, and yet have continued in it, even when they saw no help for it, no appearance against it; and if in that case the Lord pitied them, as he pitied Israel according to the flesh in Babylon, where they were mingled with the nations, and had not their liberty; they have reason to bless him for it: but now, when they are called to come out, and there is an appearance made against that with which they have all professed dissatisfaction, and that appearance every where opposed; how far can they be answerable to Jesus Christ, if they continue in mixed communion and in bondage, and so do what in them lies to knock that in the head which they have been pretending conscientiously to wish for and to advance, and promote that effectually which they have been so long groaning to be delivered from? Should any worldly inconveniency, or any carnal reasonings and consultings with flesh and blood, against the word and call of Christ, and of their own consciences, divert them, or any way terrify them, from going forth unto him without the camp bearing his reproach? "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to "come."

I am,

SIR,

Yours, &c.

The

The SPEECH of Mr JOHN GLAS before the Commiſſion of the General Aſſembly, March 11. 1730.

I Judge it my duty to lay before this commiſſion ſuch a ſtate of my difference from this national church, as may ſerve to ſhew how far it may juſtify the treatment I have met with upon it; and to manifeſt, that I differ from this church no farther than the word of God, as I underſtand it, obliges me to differ. And I am hopeful, that what I now offer, may ſerve to bring this proceſs to a ſpeedy iſſue, which is the thing I ſincerely deſire.

What lies now before the commiſſion to be conſidered as the matter of my condemnation, may be comprehended under the three following heads.

1. My refuſing to ſubſcribe the *Formula*, becauſe I cannot ſee the government of this national church by kirk-ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial ſynods, and general aſſemblies, to be founded in the word of God.

2. My refuſing to ſubſcribe ſome paſſages in the Confeſſion of Faith, touching the magiſtrate's power *circa ſacra*, and liberty of conſcience, with ſome propoſitions relative thereto, maintained by me.

3. My exerciſing the miniſterial office, after I was forbidden upon theſe grounds.

1. As to the firſt of theſe, I refuſe to ſubſcribe the *Formula*, becauſe I cannot ſee precept or example in ſcripture for the government of this national church by kirk-ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial and national ſynods; and I do not imagine, that the commiſſion will affirm there is ſuch a foundation in the word of God for the foreſaid government. And if it ſhould be my opinion, that it requires precept or example in God's word for ſuch a government to warrant me to declare, that it is founded in that word, or if I ſhould affirm, that church-courts, meeting in the name of Chriſt, require as much warrant in the word of God, as church-officers, acting in his name; I ſee not any propoſition in the public ſtandards of the church that condemns this: nor can I conceive how it ſhould be a ground of cenſure; ſince I have declared, that I look upon this as the beſt national eſtabliſhment, and that I am very far from deſiring to ſee it changed for another national church-government.

And

And though it be by me affirmed, that a congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt, with its preſbytery, is, in its diſcipline, ſubject to no juriſdiction under heaven; yet I never intended by this to deny the ſubjection of a pariſh, with its kirk-ſeſſion, unto preſbyteries, ſynods, and aſſemblies. For, when the magiſtrate divides his ſubjects into parcels, to be taught by ſo many teachers, upon the encouragement by him afforded, the nature of the thing requires, that theſe teachers ſhould be ſubject to the overſight of ſuch as, by the law that affords them a maintenance, are appointed to overſee them, and to whom that law makes them accountable. But it will not be affirmed by the commiſſion, that theſe pariſhes, and their overſeers, are of the ſame kind with the firſt Chriſtian churches or congregations, and their preſbyteries: for theſe congregations were gathered together only by the goſpel; and were diſciples of Chriſt, voluntarily aſſociated for holding ſpiritual communion together, and for the obſervation of the laws of Chriſt, and the enjoyment of the ſpiritual privileges of his kingdom, which is not of this world, and they were governed by preſbyteries freely choſen and maintained by themſelves. Now ſeeing it is evident, theſe were quite different things from pariſhes and kirk-ſeſſions, as I cannot think but pariſhes are deſigned unto better ends than to make ſuch churches, as were from the beginning, uſeleſs, and ſet them aſide; ſo I cannot perſuade myſelf, that the commiſſion will judge it a cenſurable fault in me to hold, that, notwithſtanding of the order of pariſhes, it is ſtill lawful for miniſters and diſciples of Chriſt, to conform themſelves to the firſt Chriſtian churches, with their preſbyteries, 1 Theſ. ii. 13. 14. So that, unleſs I be condemned for ſaying, that kirk-ſeſſions and pariſhes are not the ſame thing with the firſt Chriſtian preſbyteries and congregations, the only thing that remains to be conſidered, as a ground for the ſentence againſt me upon this head, is, That I affirm theſe firſt churches were not ſubjected in their diſcipline to any juriſdiction under heaven. But as the Confeſſion and *Formula* (which reſpects pariſhes) does not preciſely decide this queſtion, nor contain any propoſition that expreſsly contradicts this; ſo there is no evidence appearing to me from the word of God, that theſe firſt churches were ſubject to any juriſdiction under heaven in their diſcipline, but much to the contrary. For,

1. Our Lord lodges the power of binding and looſing under himſelf, in that church, with its preſbytery, unto which the

the offended brother tells his brother's treſpaſs, after he has neglected to hear him with the one or two more, and he promiſes his preſence with the ſmalleſt preſbytery of ſuch a church in the exerciſe of that diſcipline; and that what they do in his name on the earth ſhall be ratified in heaven, Matth. xviii. 15.—20.

When the Lord warrants the ſmalleſt preſbytery of ſuch a church to exerciſe that diſcipline in the church, I cannot ſee, that he hereby allows any number of biſhops or preſbyters, gathered together in any other manner, to bind or looſe in his name. Neither can I ſee, that his directing his diſciples in the church to carry toward them that do not hear the church, as the Jews did towards heathen men and publicans, can give any ground to think, that he would by this have his churches to be conſtituted after the form of the Jewiſh national church. But if there had been any reference in this place unto the conſtitution of the Jewiſh church, then I conceive, that a congregational church, with its preſbytery, where the worſhip and the diſcipline hold pace together, is far more agreeable to the conſtitution of that church, which was one worſhipping congregation, with its preſbytery, the Sanhedrim, and where the bounds for the worſhip and government were the ſame, and not as in national churches now, where the worſhip is comprehended in a pariſh, and the government and diſcipline extends to the whole nation. And as there were ſynagogues in the Jewiſh congregation, where the whole worſhip of the church could not be performed; ſo there may be meetings belonging unto a congregational church, wherein ſome parts of worſhip, and ſome things pertaining to the diſcipline may be done. But as the commiſſion will not allow of a conformity to the Jewiſh church in the ſubordination of church-officers, ſo as little can I ſee any reaſon for a conformity to that church in a ſubordination of church-courts; and it will not be eaſy to prove, that theſe two ſubordinations ſhould not go together.

2. As our Lord has thus committed the whole power of diſcipline under himſelf to a congregational church with its preſbytery, and left it free from any other juriſdiction; ſo, when the apoſtles had erected ſuch churches, with their preſbyteries, and were leaving them, they did not recommend them to the care of any ſuperior court or ſynod, "but to the "Lord, on whom they believed, and to the word of his grace;" and this even when they were forewarning them of the caſe of falſe teachers, groſs errors, and ſects, the very caſe for which

which ſynods have been, by the wiſdom of man, judged abſolutely neceſſary, Acts xiv. 23. Acts xx. 17. 28.—32. The apoſtle directs unto means to be uſed in this caſe under the Lord, and calls the preſbytery to take heed to themſelves, and to all the flock; but ſpeaks of no ſuch means as a ſuperior court over ſuch a preſbytery.

There were diviſions and many evils prevailing, and groſs errors held in ſome of the firſt churches, as in the church at Corinth, and ſome of the churches in Aſia; and theſe churches are condemned for ſuffering ſuch things, and commanded to reform themſelves, which they could not well do, if it belonged to their ſuperiors; but there is no inſinuation of their ſubjection in this matter unto any ſuperior court under heaven, having juriſdiction over them, nor any reference unto ſuch juriſdiction.

3. The greateſt acts of church government and diſcipline, and the moſt important deciſions in doctrine that the New Teſtament ſpeaks of, were in congregational churches, and in no other courts; as may appear from the following inſtances.

1*ſt*, Excommunication and abſolution was in the power of the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. And to any that will impartially conſider 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20. and xiv. 23. it will evidently appear to have been a congregational church. The Apoſtle indeed ſpeaks of his delivering ſome unto Satan, 1 Tim. i. 20. but it is not thereby clear, that he did it by himſelf alone, and not after the manner pointed at 1 Cor. v. 4. 5. even as it does not appear from his ſaying, the gift was given unto Timothy by the putting on of his hands, 2 Tim. i. 6. that this was not done in the preſbytery of a church, as we ſee it was, 1 Tim. iv. 14. The trying and judging of falſe apoſtles was a great buſineſs, and this was done by the elders with the flock at Epheſus, Rev. ii. 2. Compare Acts xx. 28. and that whole flock did, in the days of Ignatius, all partake of the Lord's ſupper, and pray together in one place.

2*dly*, The firſt inſtance of ordination is in the church at Jeruſalem, when it was manifeſtly but one congregation, Acts i. and that congregation was very far from comprehending all the diſciples of Chriſt then on the earth. For it is clear from 1 Cor. xv. 6. that the Lord, after his reſurrection, was ſeen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remained when Paul wrote that epiſtle. But the number of the names together was only about one hundred and twenty, when Peter ſtood up among them, and

called

trouble and burden the church at Antioch and all the Gentiles exceedingly, to think that this church ſhould be ſo far offended with them, as not to account them in a ſtate of ſalvation, ℣ 1. 24. 28.

(3.) The apoſtles were in this church, and with the elders of this church, where they began their miniſtry, and ſettled all matters of importance. And this was an important point to be fixed in this church, while they were in it. Therefore we ſee the church at Antioch had a ſpecial eye to the apoſtles their being in the preſbytery of Jeruſalem, when they ſent up this queſtion to be determined there, ℣ 2.

Thus there is nothing like a pattern for a ſynod of any kind in the 15th chapter of the Acts, but a plain pattern in the churches at Jeruſalem and Antioch, the firſt of the Jews, and the firſt of the Gentiles, for congregational churches, with their preſbyteries, and for the ſort of perſons of which thoſe churches ought to be made up, and for a preſbytery's doing things, not by numbered votes, but by agreement, and for the conſent of the whole church where they rule, unto their deciſions, and for ſuch churches their mutually helping one another, and all the diſciples of Chriſt through the world, as they have occaſion; all which is freely acknowledged by me.

4. It is not agreeable to the nature of ſuch Chriſtian churches as were from the beginning, that they ſhould be ſubject to any juriſdiction but that of the Lord Chriſt their head, or that they ſhould not depend immediately upon himſelf. For, *1ſt*, It is neceſſary unto that pure communion in brotherly love, eſpecially in the Lord's ſupper, which ought to be in them, that they have it wholly in their power, under Chriſt, to bind and looſe; and their communion in this love cannot ſtand with their being over-ruled in this matter by a ſuperior court, looſing whom they judge Chriſt commands them to bind, and binding ſuch as they judge he commands them to looſe, and receive in his name. *2dly*, Neither is it conſiſtent with their free choice of their overſeers and teachers, and their maintaining of them at their own charges, as the word of God directs, that the making up and diſſolving of the relation betwixt them and any of theſe overſeers, ſhould not be in their power under Chriſt. *3dly*, Every one of theſe churches is a complete church, repreſenting and ſhewing forth the catholic inviſible body of Chriſt, 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. And it is not agreeable unto this, that they ſhould be ſubjected to one another, or to any juriſdiction

but that of Chriſt, who is the head of the catholic body, whoſe power is manifeſted in their diſcipline, and who is the alone head of every one of them, walking in the midſt of the golden candleſticks, and holding the ſtars in his right hand, and in whom every church of the ſaints is viſibly builded together, as the catholic church is inviſibly, "for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 21. 22.

Laſtly, Synods took their riſe from that firſt ſtep of defection from the primitive inſtitution, *viz.* the ſetting of one biſhop in a church above the reſt of the preſbytery, and making them dependent on him; ſo that they were no more his peers, and could not be his judges. This corruption was very early, and came to paſs through negligence of that direction which the Apoſtle gave againſt antichriſt, 2 Theſſ. ii. 15. "Therefore, brethren, ſtand faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epiſtle." And this direction he gave, after he had ſaid before, that the myſtery of iniquity was already working. Yet this ſtep of defection was not taken when Clemens Rom. wrote his epiſtle to the church at Corinth; though, indeed, he inſinuates ſomething of a contention about the name of the epiſcopal office, in the foreknowledge of which, he ſays, the apoſtles of Chriſt conſtituted biſhops and deacons; and he ſpeaks of no more diſtinction betwixt biſhops and preſbyters than the ſcripture does, p. 54. 55. 57. However, by this ſetting up of a new kind of biſhops, and, in conſequence of that, ſynods, the way was paved for that notable change that happened, when he who at firſt letted was taken out of the way, and when the Emperor became Chriſtian, and for that uniformity which was the throne of the beaſt, the ſeat of tyranny over the conſciences of men, and the fountain of perſecution, and of ſhedding the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus, that kept the commandments of God, and the teſtimony of Chriſt, under the notion of heretics and ſchiſmatics.

II. As touching the magiſtrate's power in the kingdom of Chriſt, I have declared in what ſenſe I refuſe to ſubſcribe the Confeſſion on that head; and I have not yet been told, if that ſenſe wherein I underſtand it, and refuſed to ſubſcribe it, be now the ſenſe of this national church.

I have been very far from denying the magiſtrate's power in any civil ſociety, yea or in any national church; nor do I in the leaſt queſtion his right of judging in all matters of wrong and wicked lewdneſs, and even in all things pertaining

ing to national churches, as by law eſtabliſhed. For wherever he grants civil rights, or inflicts penalties, there he muſt judge, and there is the exerciſe of his power.

I have not denied the defence of the natural and civil rights of men in the kingdoms of this world, while I declare that Chriſt's kingdom is not of this world, and therefore admits not of a worldly defence. And when I affirm, that the natural and civil rights of mankind are to be defended in the kingdoms of this world, I reckon that the liberty of mens conſciences is one of thoſe rights; and cannot ſee ground for the magiſtrate's puniſhing heretics and ſchiſmatics as ſuch.

But becauſe this head is not ſo much inſiſted on, and the commiſſion does not ſeem to make ſo much of it as of the foregoing, I ſhall not now take up time with it.

III. So I proceed to the third head, the contumacy. And here I have been ſurpriſed at ſome ſignifying, that the other grounds are not of ſuch moment as to bear the weight of the cenſure, but this is; and though they would not depoſe men for congregational principles, yet they would for the contumacy. Yet,

1. There is nothing in that which is called *contumacy* but what is influenced by theſe principles; and it muſt be owned, that if congregational principles do not deſerve ſuch a cenſure, he that holds them, and walks up to them, is leſs cenſurable, than he that believes them, and does not practiſe them.

2. If the grounds of forbidding me to preach were not ſufficient, how is it poſſible, that a ſentence upon theſe grounds could looſe me from the obligation laid upon me to preach by the law of Chriſt? And can it be a ground for my depoſition, that I ſhewed a greater regard to his command, than to an ill-founded ſentence of ſuſpenſion?

3. If it be the mind of the commiſſion, that the ſentence of a ſynod, though ill-founded, looſes the obligation upon a miniſter to exerciſe his miniſtry, and that he is to give obedience to it without aſking queſtions, and if he do not, muſt loſe his miniſtry; then this muſt be told me, and ſupported with ſome reaſon from the word of God, and the Confeſſion of Faith; but if not, then, of neceſſity, the grounds of the ſuſpenſion were good, elſe there is no evil in the contumacy: for it cannot be called evil to diſobey a command obliging me to ſin againſt the laws of Chriſt.

Thus

Thus I have laid before my judges a plain account of my principles, and of the ſtate of my caſe as it now ſtands; and ſo I leave it with their conſciences, as I commit it unto him who is head over all things to his church, and knows well how to order it for his own glory, and the ſalvation of his church, and is able to keep all that is committed to him againſt that day.

JOHN GLAS.

Some

Some Obſervations upon the *Original Conſtitution of the Chriſtian Church.*

In a letter to the author of the book bearing that title.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1730.]

Stand ye in the ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls: but they ſaid, We will not walk therein, Jer. vi. 16.

Set thee up way-marks, make thee high heaps: ſet thine heart toward the high-way, even the way which thou wenteſt: turn again, O virgin of Iſrael, turn again to theſe thy cities. Jer. xxxi. 21.

SIR,

I Have ſeen your performance, wherein I find you take ſome notice of the explication of my propoſition. And it being now more than a year ſince the principles maintained in that explication were ſome way impugned in the defence of national churches, and further defended in my anſwer, which ſtands to this day without any return, I expected that ſome notice would have been taken by you of what I offer in that anſwer; as alſo of my ſpeech before the commiſſion, publiſhed ſome months before your book; eſpecially conſidering your objections are moſtly obviated in theſe papers of mine: but ſeeing you have not meddled with them, perhaps becauſe you have not ſeen them, I deſire you will do me the juſtice to conſider them; and when you have offered ſomething in the confutation of them, I ſhall either receive light, or know how to defend my principles, without being put to the trouble of anſwering objections that ſtand ſufficiently anſwered already, and muſt be held as anſwered, till ſuch time as you, or ſome other, ſhew the inſufficiency of the anſwers.

In

In the mean time I preſume to offer you ſome obſervations of mine upon your performance. As,

OBSERVATION I.

I find you ſtill upon the old tract of the contenders for claſſical preſbytery againſt the Independents: and as I always thought, they diſcovered another ſpirit in this diſpute, than in ſome other controverſies wherein they have been engaged; ſo they have caſt you a copy in ſeveral things, wherein I humbly judge it was not your duty to follow them. As,

1. It was always their way, to fly to human authority when they came to the pinch, in a queſtion which is only to be decided by the word of God, and to boaſt exceedingly in that authority, and almoſt anathematiſe thoſe who take upon them to differ from ſo many, ſo learned, ſo godly men, for pretending to be ſtraitened where they were not ſtraitened, and to ſee what they could not ſee. You follow them exactly in this; and ſo do you likewiſe in having recourſe to commentators, when you cannot otherwiſe inſtruct your ſenſe of a text; as if the ſenſe of ſcripture were to be found out by plurality of voices among thoſe commentators. Yea, I find you ſometimes fain to uſe the authority of Dr Owen. But if his authority be a good argument in ſome caſes, why not in others alſo? and if his authority be not a ſufficient argument to convince yourſelf, why do you bring it to convince me?

2. It has been the way of theſe writers, to tell ſtories of the diviſions among the Independents, and of the things that befel apoſtates from the congregational way, and of the ſectaries, and charge them all upon congregational principles as the cauſe; and herein they alſo copied after the Papiſts. But though this way of doing might paſs near an hundred years ago, yet the ſtories of theſe vile writers, Edwards and Baſtwick, come up again now with vaſt diſadvantage, after they have been confuted, for ſo long a tract of time, by the congregational churches in England, ſtanding monuments of the falſehood of their charges, and of the vanity of their lying prophecies. Their vile ſtories and calumnies put me in mind of the methods wherein Chriſtianity was oppoſed, when it came abroad in the world: and your innuendo about ſilly women, when you would apply the Apoſtle's prophecy, that was evidently fulfilled in the Popiſh church, unto Independents, is very like what the Heathens ſaid ſometimes againſt Chriſtians,

ſtians, who, they alledged, "gathered a company of the very "dregs and refuſe of the people, and ſilly credulous women, "who, by the weakneſs of their ſex, are eaſily impoſed up-"on, and combined into a wicked confederacy."

3. There was never a greater application of metaphyſics unto ſcripture texts, to darken and perplex them, than that which has been made by the writers for claſſical preſbytery againſt the Independents; and you would ape them in this alſo. I muſt ſay, you do it in a very diverting manner on 1 Cor. xiv. 23. 24. "If therefore the whole church be come "together into one place," *&c.* when you tell, this muſt be underſtood in a diſtributive ſenſe; and that their propheſying, and one coming in that believed not, is to be taken for their doing this in their diſtinct congregational meetings. Men of a very metaphyſical genius have been engaged in this controverſy; and, as I ſee by your book, that you learned ſome ſchool-terms; ſo your reaſonings upon the words *if* and *all*, in that text, upon which you make this exquiſite diſtinction, do convince me, that, if you had but a little more acceſs to converſe in a certain learned place, you might be inrolled among the writers for claſſical preſbytery againſt Independents. I muſt alſo ſay this for you, that you know where to uſe your diſtinctions; for where you imagine any ſhadow of ſcripture for you, there muſt be no diſtinction.

4. You likewiſe follow the example of theſe writers, in the intolerable confidence which they expreſs in an argument, they ſometimes uſe, when ſcripture fails them, *viz.* That it would be an imputation too injurious on Chriſt and his apoſtles, to ſuppoſe, that they ordered otherwiſe than according to the Preſbyterian ſcheme. Theſe writers, and you after them, put on an air of infallibility, and thereupon freely uſe all manner of reflections on the Independents, while, at the ſame time, you take the leaſt inſinuation of a reflection from an Independent, as a thing altogether intolerable. You injure not an Independent, when you tell him, as confidently as the Pope can tell Proteſtants, that he is in a dangerous error and a deluſion; that he is void of ſenſe and candor; that he is a child, or a Jeſuite, a fool, or a rogue; But if an Independent ſhould be ſo bold as to deſire more ſenſe, or more candor in your arguings, or affirm with confidence, that he is in the right, and you in the wrong; then, as if you were the only men that had right to judge, not only for yourſelves, but for all others, you pronounce the Independent too arrogant, too uncharitable, and what not. You may ſay what

you pleaſe, without proof, make conjectures, lay down ſuppoſitions, and explain ſcriptures by them, and make what inferences you will from ſcriptures, and the Independent muſt receive all for undoubted truth; but he muſt not open his lips without the ſtricteſt demonſtration.

I know that no diſpute of this kind can be carried on by fallible men, and ſubject to paſſions, without manifold diſcoveries of human frailty, which each of the parties in their turn will not fail to ſpy out very narrowly, and aggravate to the utmoſt, while they overlook what is amiſs about themſelves, or put the beſt conſtruction upon it; but ſeeing we are liable to miſtakes, and wrong biaſſes; an air of infallibility and contempt of the underſtandings of them that differ from us, as to the ſtrength of our inferences, upon ſuch a queſtion as this is, very ill becomes us, at leaſt it ill becomes Proteſtants. And if it were given to you and me "to lay "aſide all malice, and all guile, and all hypocriſies and en- "vies, and all evil ſpeakings; and as new born babes to de- "ſire the ſincere milk of the word, not following a multitude "to do evil," nor "leaning to our own underſtanding, but "truſting in the Lord with all our heart," and giving up ourſelves as weaned children to the conduct of his word, I am perſuaded we would either ſoon come to be of one mind in this matter, or "forbear one another in love."

OBSERVATION II.

Your book has confirmed me in an opinion that I have for ſome time entertained. I was of opinion, that it is not meet to manage the cauſe of claſſical and national preſbytery againſt the Epiſcopalians and Independents both in one and the ſame book. And when I ſay I am confirmed in this by reading your books, I intend no reflection on your ability for diſpute: for, I am perſuaded, the ableſt defender of preſbytery on earth would find himſelf hard put to it in a conflict with both theſe adverſaries at once; even as a Prelatiſt would be in a wretched condition in an engagement with Papiſts and Anti prelatiſts at the ſame time. It is far the wiſer courſe to have one of theſe parties for a ſecond, when you would fight with the other. And I am not ſurpriſed at your apology for your temper, which is owing to your ſituation betwixt two ſuch miſerable comforters. The Epiſcopalian was able to give you ſome comfort againſt the Independent, by his unity and order and catholic uniformity; for which he is obliged to his friend the

the Papiſt; and the Independent could afford you ſome comfort againſt the Epiſcopalian, by that very thing which you reckon his grand miſtake; and when the Epiſcopalian vexed you with the antiquity of that ſaying, "One biſhop and one "church," the Independent could have comforted you againſt him exceedingly, with that ancient word of his, "One "church and one altar." But then it might be inquired, what becomes of claſſical preſbytery? and I confeſs that is indeed the queſtion. But I am ſure the greateſt Preſbyterian writers againſt Epiſcopacy have comforted themſelves much with this independent cordial: and what Preſbyterian writer is it, that has not taken ſome comfort this way againſt the Epiſcopalians, eſpecially on the ſtate of things in the three firſt centuries? You yourſelf, that complain of both theſe comforters, are yet obliged to take ſome comfort from them; and while you are warmly engaged with one of them, you are glad to have ſome reſpite from the other. If I be miſtaken in this, you will correct me; but I will give you ſome inſtances. As,

1. When you write againſt the Epiſcopalians, you ſhew a warm zeal for the word of God, and the pattern expreſsly laid down there, in oppoſition to what crept in afterward, with the faireſt ſhew of wiſdom. But when you write againſt the Independents, you are for ſome things that your wiſdom judges moſt neceſſary unto decency and order, that do not appear in the firſt formation of churches by the apoſtles; and theſe are ſuch things as eccleſiaſtic courts meeting in the name and authority of Jeſus Chriſt. And it is your judgment, that the rulers of the churches are authoriſed to determine the number of judicatures in any kingdom where Chriſtianity is univerſally profeſſed, when they are to be divided or ſub-divided, according to the different circumſtances of churches and places; and this by virtue of the apoſtolical direction, "That all things ſhould be done decently and in or-"der," or according as they find the exigencies and edification of the whole body may be beſt advanced. Thus, while you will not ſuffer the Epiſcopalians, for decency and order, to ſet one church officer over a preſbytery and dioceſe, for the edification of the whole, you yourſelf, for decency and order, eſtabliſh three church courts, for which you have as little ſcripture warrant as he has for his officer, even kirk ſeſſions, provincial and national ſynods, p. 214. 258. 259. 260. And the thing you drive at in this, even the adapting of the government of the church to the conſtitutions of the king-

doms of this world, and making it a part of their conſtitution, and the kingdom of Chriſt in this world of the very ſame dimenſions with them, is a thing at leaſt as inconſiſtent with plain clear ſcripture, and the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, as ever you will prove a biſhop in a preſbytery to be; and a thing you have as little commiſſion for from Jeſus Chriſt as for making a Pope, which was alſo done by man's wiſdom, for decency, and order and edification. And whereas you ſay of your courts, there is no ſubſtantial or ſpecific difference between a preſbytery and provincial ſynod, *&c.* the nature of their power being materially the ſame; only the latter is more extenſive and numerous than the former, the firſt being made up of the rulers of ſeveral congregations, and the latter of theſe of ſeveral particular churches; on which account their authority muſt be proportionally the greater and more extenſive; and thus a national or œconomical aſſembly are no more ſpecifically diſtinct from one another, or from a ſynod, than a provincial ſynod is from a preſbytery: May not the ſame apology be made for the ſubordination of their officers till it come to the univerſal biſhop, the ſervant of the ſervants of God; ſeeing the higher courts rule the inferior, and the Chriſtians under their charge as effectually as the higher officers rule them that are inferior, and their authority is proportionally the greater and more extenſive, till it come to the higheſt officer, even as the authority of the courts you ſay is greater and more extenſive till it come to the higheſt court?

2. When you write againſt the Independents, you are confident there is no inſtance or example of a congregational preſbytery in the new Teſtament: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you doubt not to ſay, that moſt of the churches through the Chriſtian world were only congregational during the ſecond and third centuries; and even with reſpect to the greater churches, you would have them to be ſerved with one altar, as it is called, p. 534. 535. 536.; which, I acknowledge, anſwers beſt unto the proper ſcriptural notion of a church, both under the Old Teſtament and the New.

3. In ſtating the queſtion with the Independents about a congregation, you always make it an aſſembly hearing and capable to be edified by one paſtor preaching at a time: but againſt the Epiſcopalians, you would ſet it on another footing, and have recourſe to the Lord's ſupper, and the whole body partaking of one altar, as it is called, diſtinct from the Catechumens, p. 534. 535. So, againſt the Independents,

pendents, you make Perth and Dundee, and the like, to be two congregations; and againſt the Epiſcopalians you make them but one.

4. Againſt the Independents you gather together all theſe converted by the miniſtry of the apoſtles in Jeruſalem, and all theſe converted by Paul's miniſtry in Epheſus, where he continued by the ſpace of two years, ſo that all they which dwelt in Aſia heard the word of the Lord Jeſus; and this to make the number of Chriſtians both in Jeruſalem and Epheſus to be ſo great, that there behoved to be many congregations in each of them: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you expreſsly ſay, "The church in the ſingular number, ſo far as I can "obſerve, is no where in the New Teſtament made uſe of "in expreſs terms to denote any more than the Chriſtians in "ſome city, except when the catholic church is meant. "This I have formerly obſerved, and ſo there is no ſolid "foundation in ſcripture of any difference between a church "and the Chriſtians of ſuch a city; which is a clear evi- "dence, that the elders ſent for to Miletus were only theſe "of Epheſus; for there is not the ſmalleſt ground for taking "it in a diſtributive ſenſe, p. 425." And yet all that were converted by Paul's miniſtry while at Epheſus muſt be brought in to dwell in the city, to eſtabliſh a diſtributive ſenſe of theſe words to the elders, "Feed the flock."

5. You are very angry with the Independents for the difference they make between the key of doctrine and diſcipline upon the 15th chapter of the Acts; and think it implies a contradiction to ſuppoſe, that that meeting which you call a ſynod had power to give forth laws, and yet not to cenſure the contraveners, p. 327. And yet, againſt the Epiſcopalians, you make ſuch a difference between the exerciſe of the key of doctrine and that of diſcipline, as ſuppoſes a power of giving forth the laws of Jeſus Chriſt, and yet not of cenſuring the contraveners. For you allow that one paſtor may give forth the laws of Chriſt doctrinally; but you will not allow him by himſelf to exerciſe the power of juriſdiction and government, or to exerciſe the key of diſcipline, p. 603. You will not hinder a ſingle paſtor or a ſingle church to give forth the laws of Chriſt to all Chriſtians and all churches in the world, in a way of doctrine, and to command obedience in the name of Chriſt; but you will not allow one paſtor, or one church either, to exerciſe diſcipline, or to cenſure all other paſtors and churches for contravening all theſe laws of Chriſt,

Chriſt, that they publiſh and declare in his name and authority.

6. Againſt the Independents you make much uſe of the Jewiſh church, which you would fain have to be the ſame thing eſſentially with the Chriſtian; and you contend ſtrongly upon the ſubordination of the ſynagogues unto ſuperior courts: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you affirm, the Chriſtian church was not erected till the reſurrection of Chriſt; and you are glad to have it granted by any of them, that the Chriſtian churches were formed according to the ſynagogues, and that the Chriſtian church had its model from them, and by no means from the temple. And yet you will deny, that the church in Jeruſalem was like a ſynagogue, or formed after the model of it. But poſſibly you may tell me next of a ſynagogue claſſical.

I might here call upon you to adjuſt your own principles, and reconcile yourſelf handſomely, as a contender againſt Independency, to yourſelf as a contender againſt Epiſcopacy, before you make ſuch bold and impudent charges againſt ſuch as deſire to make the laws of Chriſt the rule and meaſure of their faith and practice, as you complain of in the Epiſcopalians againſt your faction; but if you ſtill perſiſt, then know what you yourſelf ſay to the Epiſcopalians, Append. p. 37. at the cloſe.

OBSERVATION III.

Your critical obſervations on the ſcripture, and on the explication of my propoſition, give me ſome ground to ſuſpect, there is no great reaſon for the complaint inſinuated in your preface in theſe words: "I am but an obſcure country mini-"ſter." I own, an obſcure country miniſter has little uſe for nice criticiſm; and, if his pariſh be very large, he may be more ſuitably employed than in that art, which is moſt proper for doctors of divinity. But though you had time, as you have not in your preſent ſituation, I muſt acknowledge the ſample you have given of your talent this way does not evidently declare that you deſerve the doctor's chair. No man needs ſuſpect me of a deſign to ſhew my talent in criticiſm, in order to preferment in the national church; neither can I pretend to be a critic: but you will not, I hope, reckon it preſumption in me, to put you in mind of ſome things that look very odd to me, and that I cannot eaſily underſtand, till either you, having more time, or ſome friend of yours of greater

greater genius and leiſure, clear them up to me; and if, after all, I remain in the dark, there is no help for that.

1. The firſt thing I take notice of, is what you ſay, *p.* 90. "I deſire," ſay you, "our author may aſſign us, what place "of the New Teſtament it is, that calls any ſingle church, "the church at Antioch, at Corinth, at Epheſus, *&c.* He "that pretends to a ſuperlative regard to ſcripture-ſtyle ought "ſtrictly to regard it himſelf. We have frequent mention "of the church of Epheſus, *&c.* but no where at Epheſus, "*&c.*; but this was not without deſign." Here you, that ſometimes condemn me for thinking evil, appear to me as he that trampled on Plato's pride. But I confeſs I am to this hour at a loſs to know what could be my deſign in ſaying *at*, where you would have me to ſay *of*; and I could be ſatisfied to ſee a little more of your critical ſkill upon *at* and *of*. I ſee in my Engliſh Bible, the church at Jeruſalem, Acts viii. 1. the church at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor. i. 1. which, no doubt, has led me into that way of ſpeaking at which you take umbrage. Your good liking to *of* inſtead of *at*, has put me to look for it; and ſo I find the church of the Theſſalonians, 1 Theſſ. i. 1. 2 Theſſ. i. 1. the church of the Laodiceans, Col. iv. 16. I dare not ſay of Theſſalonica, or of Laodicea, leſt I be checked by you for altering the expreſſion of deſign. But I may ſay of Epheſus: for I once read it, and, if I remember right, but once, Rev. ii. 1. And if a way of ſpeaking be to be eſtabliſhed in the method of plurality, *at* muſt carry it, for it has many againſt one, and but one. If we go to the firſt language with this nice obſervation of your's, there, I fear, we ſhall neither find *of Epheſus*, nor *at Epheſus*; but we muſt ſpeak after this manner, *the Epheſian church*. And if we ſpeak about Epheſus, as other churches are ſpoke of, we muſt ſay, "the church of the Epheſians; the church in "Epheſus;" and this laſt is the common way of ſpeaking in the New Teſtament: for, if I may preſume to tranſlate, I find, "the church in Jeruſalem, in Antioch, in Corinth," *&c.*

2. Next, I find you would puzzle me with a hard queſtion upon that famous phraſe επι το αυτο, which you find, after the Preſbyterian writers have pointed it out to you, Acts iv 25. 26 and I, it ſeems, did not ſet it down when I noted down other texts: but I aſſure you, if it had been in my eye, I had ſet it down, as making for the ſenſe of that phraſe which I contend for. Your queſtion is, Is it to be learned from any part of the ſacred oracles, that Herod, Pontius Pilate, and

and the kings of the earth, with the rulers, aſſembled together in one place, againſt the Lord and his Chriſt? This queſtion had been more exact, though perhaps not ſo pungent, if you had kept cloſe by the words of the text; and I ſhall not ſay it was of deſign, that you did not keep by them. If you had ſeen my anſwer to the "Defence of national churches," a part of the ſacred oracles had caſt up to you, where you would have found the kings of the earth, even Herod and Pontius Pilate, ſtanding up, and the rulers, even the rulers of the Jews, gathered επι το αυτο, *in one place*, againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt; and that is Luke xxiii. from the 1ſt to the 15th verſe. You muſt take notice, that ℣ 26. of Acts iv. ſays only, "The rulers were gathered" επι το αυτο; and this is the ſenſe of the Hebrew adverb VAHAD, which ſignifies *in one*, as the Greek words properly ſignify, *in the ſame*. And if the conſtant ſenſe of the Greek phraſe in the New Teſtament be, *in one* or *the ſame* place, and be found in that ſignification here, then this is the ſenſe of the Hebrew word, as it ſtands in Pſalm ii. 2. And whatever other uſes it may be otherwiſe put to, yet there it muſt ſignify *one place*. And in that text, as well as in Acts iv. 26. it is only aſcribed to the rulers, as ſtanding up is unto the kings. I need not tell you, that ℣ 27. chap. iv. of the Acts, is an explication of ℣ 25. and 26. of that chapter. I would have you alſo to notice, that in ℣ 27. there is a different reading, which is to be found in the Syriac, vulgate Latin, and Beza's Latin verſions, according to ſeveral Greek manuſcripts; and I have it in Bleau's Greek Teſtament, where, after αληθειας, you may read εν τη πολει ταυτη. I am far from inſiſting on this different reading; only, if it has crept into ſome copies as a gloſs, it may be from thence inferred, that, when that gloſs obtained, επι το αυτο was underſtood to ſignify *in one place*. But whatever be in this, that we may have a diſtinct view of ℣ 27. we may conſider the words in the order wherein they ſtand in the original "For there were gathered together, of a "truth, againſt thy holy child Jeſus, whom thou haſt a-"nointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, "and (with) the people of Iſrael." Allow me now to aſk you, Does the foreſaid part of the ſacred oracles (Luke xxiii. 1.—15.) teach you, that Herod, with his men of war, was together in one place with the people of Iſrael? and does it not alſo teach you, that Pontius Pilate (and if there were any Gentiles with him) was alſo aſſembled together in one place with the people of Iſrael? Do you not find the rulers of

of the Jews aſſembled in one place both before Pilate and before Herod? And then tell me what more ſays the text on this ſubject? And further tell me, if it lie in your power, what place of the New Teſtament it is, from which you or I may learn that επι το αυτο does not carry one place always in its meaning? and I'll be obliged to you.

You do not offer to bring any text of the New Teſtament, to ſhew the leaſt miſtake in what I have ſaid of ὁμοθυμαδον; but you deny it, and deſire the authority of a diſintereſted perſon, ſkilled in the Greek language, to confirm what I ſay. Truly a diſintereſted perſon will not be eaſily found; and for ſkill in the Greek language, if you mean the knowledge of the ſenſe of that word in Greek authors, it cannot determine the queſtion, which is about the conſtant ſignification of that word in the New Teſtament. I had ſaid, this word ſeems not to be uſed in the New Teſtament, but in the caſe of more or fewer concurring perſonally in the ſame action; and I cited all the texts that occurred to me where the word is uſed: if, therefore, you can bring me no text of the New Teſtament where this word has not this import, far better yield it, than talk beſide the purpoſe. If you pleaſe to look and compare Acts ii. 1. 3. 4. 38. Acts x. 44.—47. you will find ground for another aſſertion of mine, for which you want proof.

3. I confeſs I am ſurpriſed with your criticiſm upon "they "all," Acts v. 12. You ſay, it is contrary to the natural and grammatical conſtruction of the words, to make οι παντες to be conſtructed with ὁλην την εκκλησιαν. I acknowledge I never made grammatical conſtruction much my ſtudy; but I have been put to look in what order words lie in the New Teſtament, and I think I find the like conſtruction there, Acts vi. 5. Acts viii. 1. 1 Theſſ. i. 12. 2 Theſſ. i. 1. 2. 3. Neither can I ſee any thing unnatural in a diſcourſe, where a ſociety, a multitude is ſpoken of, when I hear it ſaid, They all did ſuch a thing, or, They are all in ſuch a place; at leaſt I think this is very common. I cannot but wonder to ſee this obſervation of yours, the foundation and ſtrength of your arguing, to prove, that by *them all* that were with one accord in Solomon's porch, we muſt not underſtand the whole church, but only the apoſtles. And to help on your arguings upon this head, you would have it believed, that the text ſays, the people magnified the apoſtles on account of the miracles wrought; whereas, whatever be ſaid in the context, the text ſays only, "the people magnified *them*." And the queſtion is, What *them?* It is manifeſt, that it is *them* that

were all with one accord in Solomon's porch, and to whom no man of the reſt durſt join himſelf. But the queſtion ſtill remains, What are *they all* that are ſaid to be with one accord in Solomon's porch? and what we are to underſtand by *the reſt*? You ſay *they all* are the apoſtles, and *the reſt* are the whole church: And ſo you teach us, that the providence about Ananias made a ſeparation between the whole church and the apoſtles; which, I think, could be no advantage to the church, eſpecially when in great fear; and the apoſtles, by this means, loſt a precious opportunity of doing good to the church.

But the ſacred writer ſeems to be declaring, that the church was ſo far from being at any loſs by that dreadful providence, that it was rather the better for it; and, if I miſtake not, we are not ſo much acquainted of the fear of the preſence of the twelve, as of the fear of God, ſhewing himſelf awful in the church, that fell upon all the church, and upon others that heard theſe things. Neither is there any inſinuation, that either the church, or the reſt of the people upon whom this fear came, fled from the apoſtles, but rather the contrary. At leaſt, if the whole church fled from their preſence, the context tells us, the multitudes of other people came the nearer them. In a word, it is impoſſible to inſtruct from this paſſage, or even make it appear feaſible, that either the church, or the reſt of the people, fled from the preſence of the apoſtles on this occaſion; but it is moſt eaſy to conceive, that the reſt of the people, that were moved with the fear of God on this occaſion, durſt not lightly join the church as members, and yet magnified the church.

4. You look carefully into the book of the Acts, to find out every thing that may be any way wreſted to your purpoſe; but are not, it ſeems, ſo quick-ſighted as to pretty clear things there againſt you; and therefore, with no ſmall aſſurance, you reflect on me, for inſinuating, that there was a feaſt at Jeruſalem when Paul went up, Acts xxi.; and you ſay, it is but a begging of the queſtion, till I prove it, *p.* 241. But, ſeeing you make the queſtion to turn upon this hinge, I have ſome hopes to ſatisfy you, that I did not beg it, as you love to ſpeak, in this inſinuation, if the word of God be of any uſe to decide the queſtion: and therefore I deſire you may look chap. xx. where you find Paul on his way up to Jeruſalem at this time, and conſider ℣ 16. and likewiſe chap. xxi. ℣ 27. and ſee if the ſame thing be not as fully inſinuated in the word of God, as it was by me. Yet I cannot attribute

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your way of treating the ſcriptures, to make the myriads of which James ſpeaks to Paul, members of the church in Jeruſalem, ſo much to want of ſight and nice inſpection, as to ſome other thing. For, when you ſay, p. 188. "We find "there were great additions made to the church of Jeruſa-"lem; for it is ſaid, they had reſt, and were multiplied, "Acts ix. 31." I cannot think that you never looked at Acts ix 31. where you ſee the churches throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, had reſt, and were multiplied; but you ſet down *they*, inſtead of *theſe* churches, and conſtruct *they* with the church of Jeruſalem, to your unwary reader; though yet, in another caſe, you could ſay, that *the church* and *they* would not conſtruct together.

Next, you find additions made to the church in Jeruſalem, by the growth and multiplication of the word of God, Acts xii. 24. as if there had been no church to receive additions by that, but the church in Jeruſalem. And then you tell us, to ſhut up all, James and the elders inform Paul, Acts xxi. 20. "Thou ſeeſt, brother, how many thouſands [or my-"riads] of Jews there are which believe." And, p. 240. & 241. you would have your reader imagine, that the myriads of believing Jews that James ſpeaks of to Paul, ℣ 20. are the ſame thing with the multitude that he ſaid would be informed of his coming to the city, and therefore would needs come together, ℣ 22; as if there had been no believing Jews, but ſuch a multitude as could eaſily hear of Paul's coming into the city, and come together upon that. I have a better conceit of your underſtanding, than to allow myſelf to think, that theſe methods ſerve to perſuade yourſelf of what you are ſaying; and the only apology I can make for you is, That you ſee honeſt Preſbyterians have uſed theſe ſcriptures in the ſame manner before you, and this gives you confidence.

5. Upon πληθος and παν το πληθος, you cite Luke viii. 37. and inquire, if I will ſay, that every individual perſon in that whole country of the Gadarenes came forth? And you likewiſe cite, Luke i. 10. and ſay, you believe it will be hard to make it appear, that all the people in Jeruſalem were without, praying, at the time Zacharias was offering incenſe. And I ſay, I cannot take upon me to affirm, that every individual member of a congregational church, man and woman, comes together at any time, when it may be ſaid the whole church comes together in one place to do any thing. Even as, when you ſay, the whole ſynod, or the whole multitude of

the general aſſembly, comes together, or agrees to do a thing, I would injure you, if I ſaid you ſpoke falſe, becauſe I found that every individual in the roll of the ſynod or aſſembly was not preſent. I referred you to Lauder upon this, and pointed you to the title of the book; and I refer you to him again. But I do not expect that my reference to him upon this will be taken to import, that I differ in no point from him. I cannot deny, that one biſhop came to have the preeminency over his brethren in the preſbytery very early, and that this was a deviation from the apoſtolical pattern; but this preſbytery and church where that biſhop was, muſt be owned to be one congregation, having one altar, as it came to be called; and this, as it is agreeable to the apoſtolical pattern, effectually deſtroys both dioceſan Epiſcopacy and claſſical Preſbytery, as far as antiquity is concerned: for, if the πας το πληθος, under the inſpection of the preſbytery, or the one biſhop that came to be ſet over them, partook of one bread and one cup, and had but one communion-table; then the churches were neither dioceſan nor claſſical, but only congregational; and if ſuch were the churches where this innovation of one biſhop over a preſbytery took place, ſuch were the apoſtolic churches.

You have a very rare obſervation upon το πληθος μαθητων, its being in the maſculine gender; for you ſay it ſeems to point forth it was an aſſembly of men, and not of women; and then you reckon, that women have no concern in the choice of officers in the church where they are: and ſuch are the obſervations that ſatisfy you, it ſeems, that the preſbyterian model of government, and form of a church, is divine, in oppoſition to the congregational.

6. I want to know how you obſerved, p. 418. That Paul planted a church at Epheſus before he met with the twelve diſciples; and what ground have you to affirm, that it was not his practice, in other cities, to go from places where there were diſciples, and leave them without paſtors, when the contrary is ſo evident from the book of the Acts, chap. xiv. and Tit. i. 5.

7. Your obſervation upon the word *brethren*, is according to a fancy of mine, when I firſt read the Bible, and underſtood by that word only the Preſbyterian miniſters, whom I heard calling one another *brethren*; but it is altogether unworthy of any man of tolerable ſenſe. You ſay, "That "*brother*, or *brethren*, is uſually applied as the characte-"riſtic of church officers, as diſtinguiſhed from the ſaints

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" or private believers of any church." And when you have noted down many texts, you go on to ſay, " And indeed our " Lord appropriates this name to his apoſtles, and thereby " expreſſes that equality of authority and power that was a- " mong them, or that one of them was not raiſed above an- " other in office, Matth. xxiii. 8." And this is what you alledge to juſtify your aſſertion, That, by *the brethren*, Acts xv. we are to underſtand perſons in office. But you muſt both alledge and prove more, before you juſtify that aſſertion: for, to make that good, you muſt prove, that the word *brethren* is the characteriſtic of church-officers, as diſtinguiſhed from other Chriſtians, and that where it is uſed in a diſtinction between elders and thoſe that are deſigned by it, as it is Acts xv. And nothing that you alledge on this head will prove your point, except it ſhall appear, that *brother*, or *brethren*, occurs not any where in the New Teſtament, but where it denotes perſons in office. And this cannot be evident till you manifeſt, that the command of brotherly love reſpects only perſons in office. But I will not be ſurpriſed, though you confine that command to perſons in office, and underſtand nothing elſe but them by the words *brother* and *brethren*, in the firſt epiſtle of John, when I conſider the account you make of the ſaints, or private believers of the churches, by whom I reckon you underſtand the members of the churches not in office. For theſe, according to you, were ſuch perſons of whom no viſible poſitive evidence of their being ſaints or believers, was or ought to be required, in order to their being church-members; and as to whom no man was to look after any poſitive evidence for a foundation of any charitable judgment concerning them, that they were believers.

Probably it may alſo be your mind, that the brethren, upon whom the brethren of your ſynod laid the burden, Acts xv. were perſons in office, as diſtinguiſhed from the private believers of the churches. But this would burden the brethren, the office-bearers only, with the yoke in ſynodical authority, and leave the church-members free; which will by no means conſiſt with your ſenſe of Matth. xxiii. 8. Though I cannot deny, but that text is perverted by you, while, without attending to the context, you would make us believe, that our Lord is only forbidding the officers to lord over one another, and not forbidding them to lord over the people, as the ſcribes and Phariſees did, nor the people to ſubject their conſciences to their authority. Further, I

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am not ſure but you would have us to underſtand only a church-officer, as diſtinguiſhed from a private believer in a church, by the word *brother*, Matth. xviii. " If thy brother " treſpaſs;" and, 1 Cor. v. " If any that is called a bro " ther :" and if this be ſo, then let the clergy only exerciſe diſcipline upon one another, they muſt not, it ſeems, bind or looſe the private believers of any church ; for who gives them a power to judge " them that are without," *i. e.* them that are not called *brethren ?*

It is moſt eaſy to manifeſt, that the ſaints, or private believers of a church, even all the members, as diſtinguiſhed from their elders, are called *brethren* ; and no man that but glances theſe two texts, will eaſily doubt of it, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. 13. Heb. xiii. 22. You note down a great many places, which ſhew, that the apoſtles called them that were in office *brethren* ; and you might alſo have noted down texts to ſhew, that the apoſtles themſelves were called *diſciples*, while they were ſent to preach. And, whatever take place now, who doubts, but thoſe that were in office were ſaints, and faithful, in the judgment of charity ; and ſo brethren, as well as they that were not in office in the churches ? But I am ſtill at a loſs to find the place where thoſe in office are diſtinguiſhed from private members of churches, and that by the word *brethren.* Surely I cannot find them diſtinguiſhed by a word common to them with others. And if you had well conſidered the texts you note down, you had found other deſignations added to diſtinguiſh officers from other brethren out of office ; and which I would have you to notice. Theſe deſignations import ſervice, 2 Cor. viii. 23. Eph. vi. 21. Phil. ii. 25.

8. I confeſs I am aſtoniſhed at an aſſertion of yours, concerning Judas and Silas, p. 313. that they were not members of the church of Jeruſalem, but prophets at Antioch, and ſometime members of that church, and your inquiry thereupon. What power, ſay you, had the elders of Jeruſalem to miſſionate Judas and Silas, when they were not members of that church, but prophets at Antioch, unleſs they had been a part of that ſynodical meeting? For this you cite Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. which proves prophets at Antioch ; but there is not a word there of Judas and Silas. Next you have Acts xv. 32. 35. and if you had conſidered the context and intervening verſes, you might have ſeen, that they belonged to Jeruſalem, and not to Antioch ; unleſs you would infer, from Silas's being ſent to Antioch, and then let go, and then

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chuſing to abide at Antioch, that he was a member of that church before he came there. But this is of a piece with the reſt of the mighty inferences upon which ſynodical authority is eſtabliſhed. You infer from Judas and Silas their being prophets, that they were certainly church officers; and, by the ſame rule, you no doubt believe, that the diſciples, Acts xxi. 4. and Philip's four daughters, ỳ 9. were church-officers; and you infer, from their being chief men or captains, as you call them, among the brethren, that the brethren among whom they were captains were church officers. You have alſo a rare criticiſm upon Acts xvi. 4. and an inference upon it, which might well have been ſpared if you had looked back to the ſecond verſe; and that would alſo have ſaved you the trouble of looking through the New Teſtament, as far down as the Revelation, for the ſupport of that fancy. But it would be endleſs to trace you in all your wild extravagancies upon Acts xv.

I ſhall conclude this obſervation with taking ſome notice of your account of the nature and import of the word εκκλησια, or *church*.

You affirm, it is uſed to expreſs the viſible and catholic body of Chriſt, which conſiſts of all thoſe throughout the world that profeſs the true religion, together with their children and offſpring, p. 51.

When I was declaring the import of this word in the explication of the propoſition, I propoſed a queſtion; which, inſtead of anſwering directly, you are pleaſed to overlook, while you are very liberal in your uncharitable rebukes to me, for paſſing over this import of the word. The queſtion is this, *Expl. above*, p. 157. It may be a queſtion, If all the diſciples of Chriſt throughout the world be called *the church* any otherwiſe than as they appear, and in the Judgment of charity are reckoned to be of this "general aſſembly, and church "of the firſt-born?" And now, Sir, I am ready to maintain the negative in the anſwer of this queſtion, for any thing I have yet ſeen in your book, or in any Preſbyterian writer, to the contrary. Thus you have a fair theſis before you; try your metaphyſical and critical ſkill upon it; and when you ſay enough to convince me of my miſtake in this poſition, I ſhall retract it: but I will not be moved away from it by quibbles, nor will I be bullied out of it by authorities and bluſtering words.

I ſhall now conſider the texts you bring for this import of the word. And the firſt of them is, 1 Cor. i. 2. which you connect

connect with chap. xii. 28. " To the church of God which " is at Corinth, with all that in every place call upon the " name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.——And God hath ſet ſome " in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondarily prophets, thirdly " teachers." I do not find all them that in every place call on the name of the Lord, called *the church*, 1 Cor. i. 2.; but I find the ſociety in Corinth called *the church in Corinth*, and the members of it ſaid to be ſanctified, and called to be ſaints, together with all that call on the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in every place. And am I from thence to infer, that all that in every other place called on Chriſt's name are meant by the word *church* there? But perhaps the ſtreſs leans upon the connection betwixt this text and chap. xii. 28. And will you ſay, that the import of the word *church* there is the ſame with the import of it here? or though all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jeſus be not here called *the church*, yet there they go under that deſignation by virtue of the connection betwixt this text and that? This is what I reckon you intend; but may you not as well connect this verſe with the following part of the ſame chapter, and with the third chapter, and with the eleventh chapter, and ſay, that the Apoſtle is aſcribing thoſe unchriſtian ſchiſms, and thoſe diſorders about the Lord's ſupper, to all that call on the name of the Lord in every place? In the ſame manner you affirm ſtrongly, that all " the ſtrangers " ſcattered abroad," *&c.* to whom Peter directs, are called *one flock*, and all the twelve tribes to whom James directs are called *one church*, and *one aſſembly*. And thus any man may make the ſcriptures ſay any thing he thinks fit.

Look throughout 1 Cor. xii. and ſee if you can find any church there but the body myſtical, which is called *Chriſt*, and the church in Corinth, to which the Apoſtle accommodates what he ſays of the body myſtical, becauſe it was viſible, or outwardly repreſented in the church at Corinth. The body that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of there is all animated by the Spirit of the Lord Chriſt, from whom it has its denomination, by reaſon of the unſpeakable union which is by his Spirit: and will you ſay, that all thoſe whom you make members of your viſible body are made to drink into that one Spirit? and this after you have declared that their religion lies only in the breath of their lips, and that they may be altogether void of the Spirit? This is that body into which the Apoſtle ſays they all, both Jews and Gentiles, were baptized. And, after he has ſpoken of God's ſetting the members in this body,

and

and tempering it together ſo as there may be no ſchiſm in it, he applies what he had ſaid home to the church at Corinth, appointed, as all particular churches are, to ſhew forth this body myſtical, as they are alſo inſtituted on all accounts for the ſake of it It is alſo manifeſt, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the gifts of the Spirit for the edification of the body myſtical, and for the eſtabliſhing of a due profeſſion of the Lord Chriſt in the churches of the ſaints, and this for the ſake of the myſtical body. Now, let me know, were not all theſe gifts in the church at Corinth, and the apoſtolic gift firſt; for thereby the foundation of it was laid. And then, anſwer me, Did not God ſet apoſtles, prophets, *&c.* in the body myſtical? However you may quibble on this queſtion, yet, if you anſwer it affirmatively, you ſpeak good ſound ſcripture-language; and, if you pleaſe, I will direct you to a place or two that will ſupport you, Rev. xxi. 14. Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.

Your next text is Eph. iii. 10. which I read thus: "To "the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in "heavenly places, might be known by the church the ma-"nifold wiſdom of God." I cannot underſtand how it came in your head to take the import of the word *church* here to be your viſible body, diſtinct from the inviſible, and from a particular church. And till I underſtand how you make it out, I muſt remain honeſtly perſuaded, as before, that it is the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born that is intended

Then you have 1 Cor. x. 32. "Give none offence, neither "to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of "God." I cannot tell how your argument ſhould proceed upon this place, unleſs it be by denying this propoſition, That when a man gives offence to one viſible member of the church, or one that appears to be a member of that myſtical body, he offends the whole; even as Saul perſecuted the inviſible head in heaven, in perſecuting the viſible members. But this cannot be eaſily denied. Further, I reckon, that as you imagine the Apoſtle is not in this text intending the body myſtical, ſo neither do you think he intends the church at Corinth, or any ſuch church whereof Chriſtians happen to be members. And upon ſuch ſuppoſitions ſtands your viſible body as the import of the word *church* here.

You next cite Heb. ii. 12. "I will declare thy name unto "my brethren, in the midſt of the church will I ſing praiſe "unto thee." I always took this to ſignify the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, conſiſting of Chriſt's bre-

thren, in whoſe name he glorifies the Father, and unto whom he declares his Father's name, as John xvii. 26. But ſo fond are you of that viſible catholic body which you imagine to yourſelf, that you take not leiſure to think well of the body myſtical, which is indeed the church, nor to conſider what is proper to it.

In the laſt place, you have 1 Tim. iii. 15. "That thou mayſt "know how to behave thyſelf in the houſe of God, which is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the "truth." It ſeems you are perſuaded, that neither the whole building of God, built on the foundation of the prophets and apoſtles, Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, in whom it is all fitly framed together, and growing unto an holy temple, nor the little habitation of God at Epheſus, ſhewing forth that building, Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21. 22. can be underſtood by *the church of the living God* in this text. But your own explication of Acts xx. 28. however croſs it be to the ſcope of the text, might have ſerved to make you underſtand, that the elders of the church in Epheſus were bound to feed the church; which is by no means, ſay you, to be underſtood to be the church as viſible, and can only be meant of thoſe who are truly redeemed, and is evidently the inviſible body of Chriſt, p. 158. 159. If you underſtand this well, I reckon you will not help thinking, that not only apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, but even paſtors and teachers were given to feed, *i. e.* govern the inviſible body of Chriſt.

But when men lay down a ſcheme of principles inconſiſtent with the ſcriptures, they muſt alſo, it ſeems, take inconſiſtent methods of explaining the ſcripture, to make it anſwer to all the parts of their ſcheme.

When you have cited theſe ſcriptures, you tell us, "Nay, "the children of profeſſing and Chriſtian parents are to be "reputed members of the viſible church." But I would aſk you, why are they not to be reputed members of the myſtical body, if one of the parents be to be ſo reputed? But, according to you, the profeſſion of Chriſtianity is not ſuch a thing as gives ground to repute any man that makes it a member of the body of Chriſt. And then you conclude, "From "all which it is manifeſt, that there is a catholic viſible "church in the world, to which Chriſt, by a deed of gift, "gave apoſtles, prophets, and teachers, with an external po-"lity or government." And then, in another place, p. 104. 105. you bring this as a ſtanding witneſs againſt the Independent notions, and a warrant for national and provincial churches;

churches; and you bring two other texts to prove it, Eph. iv. 4. 11. 12. and Rom. xii. 4. 10.; from which I could be content to ſee your inference, ſhewing your catholic body viſible and organiſed, as it ſtands diſtinguiſhed by you from the body myſtical, which you ſay is not organiſed, and from the congregations of the ſaints. But I will have occaſion to touch at theſe texts afterwards; only I cannot but admire your confidence, in bringing ſuch texts for your catholic body viſible, conſidering the account you elſewhere give of its conſtituent members.

You will allow me, in the concluſion of what I have been ſaying upon this import of the word *church*, to ſay, it is manifeſt, there is no ground for all your mighty confidence in the perſuaſion you have about a catholic viſible organic body, with an external government. And though you may have a general notion of all the profeſſors of the name of Chriſt on the earth, and expreſs this your notion by the word *church* as you pleaſe; yet I deſire you may ſhew me where, but in your own head, all theſe profeſſors are united viſibly together in the unity of one eccleſiaſtic government. Produce your ſtanding witneſs againſt the Independent notions; ſhew us if this witneſs be any where in the habitable world, and then we ſhall ſee how far it warrants your national and provincial churches.

In the mean time, you go about to warrant national and provincial churches from the New Teſtament: which I own is the ſame thing to us that the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts were to the firſt churches; for though they were with us, we would, in that caſe, have no more but what we have in the New Teſtament: and if you can bring me a warrant from thence for theſe churches, I will own there is a ſtanding warrant for them.

You ſay the churches of Galatia appear to have been under one eccleſiaſtical government. And how does that appear? It appears thus: "They are all written to as if one "ſingle church, under the ſtricteſt ties of unity, and oneneſs "of judgment and affections." I ſee the epiſtle directed to the churches of Galatia; and it appears that theſe churches were under the prevailing influence of falſe doctrine; this was common to them: ſo that one epiſtle ſerves them all on this ſubject. Here I find no oneneſs but an oneneſs in error, and one epiſtle directed againſt it, to convince and perſuade the diſciples in the churches of Galatia. And as for that oneneſs of judgment and affections that the word of God calls

Chriſtians, in all the churches of the ſaints, to endeavour after; as it is a quite other thing than your one eccleſiaſtic government, ſo the diſciples in the churches of Galatia ſeem not to be commended by the Apoſtle for it: neither is he there in the leaſt inſinuating, that one church in Galatia, as ſuch, was divided from another, but that the diſciples in the churches were biting and devouring one another. You ſay, all the churches, in one body, are required to beware of falſe teachers, guard againſt corrupt doctrines and diviſions. And to prove that they were called to do this in one body, in your ſenſe of it, you tell, the ſeveral churches of Galatia were but one lump. And this you would make out from the Apoſtle's telling the ſeveral churches of Galatia, as he ſaid to the church of Corinth, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole "lump:" As if that could not be as true in reſpect of every one of theſe churches as in reſpect of the church in Corinth; and as if that proverb might not be uſed toward all the churches of the ſaints in the like caſe, without underſtanding them all to be united in one viſible eccleſiaſtic government.

You ſay further, the Apoſtle ſays, "He would they were even "cut off that trouble them;" and then you inquire, What was ſaid to any particular church, for the maintaining of order, unity, and carrying on of joint edification, and preſervation of that ſacred body from being leavened with falſe doctrines and diſorders, which is not ſaid jointly to the ſeveral churches of Galatia? I make no queſtion but what is ſaid in the New Teſtament to any one church for theſe ends, is ſaid to every church in the world, to the end of time; and every church in Galatia had as much power unto theſe purpoſes as any other particular church; and the Apoſtle writes to theſe churches, as having every one of them this power. But he writes not to a church of rulers, repreſenting and ruling over all theſe churches; which is the remedy man's wiſdom has deviſed in ſuch caſes: nor does he write to theſe churches to proceed ſo with one another, as the Lord commands one brother in a church to do with another, Matth. xviii. though I ſee you would fain make that out to your reader, by your way of citing Gal. vi. 1. 2. which I read thus: "Bre"thren, if a man (not a church) be overtaken in a fault, "ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of "meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfill the law of "Chriſt." And I would fain know of you, what is ſaid to the churches of Galatia, that might not be done by every one

one of theſe churches, and the diſcipies in them, without their being united in one eccleſiaſtic government, as you ſay? And ſeeing your one eccleſiaſtic body, you think, is for the very purpoſes for which the Apoſtle wrote to theſe churches, tell me why the Apoſtle's letter has no direction unto it, but unto the churches; and no reference unto it, but a requiring of ſuch things as might be done by every one of theſe churches, and the diſciples in them, without that body you ſpeak of? Tell me further, if any one of theſe churches could reform itſelf according to the Apoſtle's letter, without waiting for the bringing about of that reformation, by the agreement of the plurality of the elders of all theſe churches met in a body? And if any one of them was bound by the Apoſtle's letter to reform upon ſight thereof, and might do it, what was to hinder every one of the reſt to do the like?

But perhaps you mean no more by their being under one eccleſiaſtic government, but that the one letter ſent from the Apoſtle and them that were with him, bound and obliged them all to obedience. And in this ſenſe I will own to you, that all the churches of the ſaints are united; for they have one New Teſtament, and the ſcripture of the apoſtles and prophets, binding them all to obedience. And I muſt ſay, if you ſee a provincial or national church in the epiſtle to the churches of Galatia, or if it preſent a Preſbyterian face to you, as you ſpeak, you may look for it next in the firſt chapter of Geneſis.

To confirm the ſame thing that you was endeavouring to let us ſee in the epiſtle to the churches of Galatia, you ſay, the churches ſcattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and Bithynia, are expreſsly called "the flock of "God;" and the elders are conjunctly required to "feed," or, as the original word ſignifies, "rule and govern this one "flock which was among them;" not by conſtraint, but willingly. But it would have been fair to have told out the reſt, and ſaid, that the elders are required to feed the flock of God which is among them; and that not as being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to the flock; and then, p. 420. 421. you inquire, Are not all the diſperſed Jews throughout the different provinces of Pontus, *&c.* expreſsly called *one flock*, 1 Pet. i. 1. compared with chap. v. ℣ 2.? To which queſtion I anſwer negatively; and ſay, The flock there can be no other than ſuch a ſociety of Chriſtians as every company of elders had among them, and they could feed as being enſamples to it; even ſuch a flock as the elders

ders in Epheſus had among them, and fed as enſamples, taking heed to themſelves and to all the flock over the which they were overſeers to feed the church, watching and warning every one. When elders are required to feed the flock, there is no queſtion but it imports rule and government; but the conſtant diſpenſation of the ordinances, and particularly the Lord's ſupper, is imported in it alſo: and as theſe are both comprehended in the Apoſtle's exhortation, what ground is there to imagine the Apoſtle is pointing to any other flock than that which the elders might feed, in the entire ſenſe of the word?

No company of elders is required to feed any flock here but the flock which is among them, and to which they are enſamples; and every company of elders is required as enſamples to feed the flock which is among them; and what kind of a flock that is, no man can be in any ſtrait to conceive. I cannot imagine that the Apoſtle is hereby requiring the elders in Epheſus, in the Proconſular Aſia, to feed the diſciples in Pontus; or elders in Alyth, to feed the Chriſtian people in the north or ſouth of Scotland, or at London, that perhaps never ſo much as heard of them or their converſation. It is poſſible that all that go under the Chriſtian name in Scotland, (who yet cannot be called God's heritage without ſuch a charity as may call all the world ſo), may have heard of ſome orders iſſued out from the general aſſembly, whereof an elder in Alyth happened to be a member; but is it poſſible, with ſobriety of mind, to be perſuaded, that ſuch a thing as this is intended in this exhortation to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you," taking the overſight επισκοπουντες, not as lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to the flock? I have frequently thought, that the outcry againſt the dioceſian biſhop's taking the overſight of a flock, which yet he could not overſee, came very ill from the miniſters of ſingle pariſhes, every one of them claiming ſhare in the common overſight of a whole nation, as one church.

You next inſiſt upon the direction of James's epiſtle to the twelve tribes ſcattered abroad, which, you ſay, were the ſame to whom Peter indited his firſt epiſtle. And, chap. v. 14. they are denominate *the church*: "Is any man ſick a-"mong you," *i. e.* the twelve tribes, "let him call for the "elders of the church, and let them pray over him." And then you deſire me to chuſe, whether this church was a ſingle congregation or not. But if I ſhould affirm, that the text plainly

plainly points to any one ſingle congregation, whereof any one of thoſe to whom he directs happened to be a member, and ſick; and if I ſhould deny, that the Apoſtle any where calls all thoſe to whom he directs *the church*, or *one church*, you will chuſe what you ſhall ſay next. You alledge further, That the ſame ſcattered tribes are deſigned *an aſſembly*, in the ſingular number, James ii. 2. And then you give me another choice; either it is an aſſembly for public worſhip, or an eccleſiaſtic judicature. But here is no choice to me, who acknowledge no eccleſiaſtic judicature, but that which is in a worſhipping congregation: and to this agrees what you ſay in referring to the ſynagogue upon this text; for the rulers of the ſynagogue ruled in a worſhipping congregation.

But you ſay, if *aſſembly* mean a Chriſtian aſſembly for public worſhip, your point is gained; namely, that many particular churches or congregations of Chriſtians are denominated *aſſembly*, in the ſingular number, ſeeing your aſſembly muſt undeniably have a reference to the twelve tribes, to whom the epiſtle was indited. And why did not you, by the ſame way of reaſoning, ſhew, from chap. ii. 11. 18. 20. that all the twelve tribes were one man made up of many ſingle men; ſeeing "Thou," and "O vain man," *&c.* muſt undeniably have a reference to the twelve tribes, to whom the epiſtle was indited? Theſe, Sir, are the methods you take with the holy ſcriptures, to make them look to yourſelf and your reader with a Preſbyterian face, and a national aſpect; and while I admire the wiſdom of God in guarding ſo ſtrictly againſt you in the ſcripture-language on this ſubject, I conſider with myſelf, how exceeding big you would look, if the language of the New Teſtament made but half ſo much for you, as it does for them that are againſt you in this queſtion.

You alſo affirm, p. 52. 53. *&c.* "That the word *church* "is made uſe of in the ſacred oracles to expreſs the paſtors "and rulers of the viſible body of Chriſt, who are peculiarly "called forth to rule and govern the Redeemer's flock, or "profeſſors of the true religion, by aſſembling themſelves "together in an eccleſiaſtic judicature, and their jointly ex-"erciſing acts of juriſdiction over them."

For this you cite Matth. xviii. 17. "Tell the church," and fly to the import of Hebrew words, and to Jewiſh traditions, when the queſtion is only about the import of the word *church*, as it is applied in the New Teſtament. And becauſe you cannot inſtruct your ſenſe of this text from the text or context, or from

from the writings of the apoſtles, that declare to us more fully the things that began to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf, you betake yourſelf to authorities, and rail at the Independents: ſo you do not beg the queſtion of them; but, if I may alter your ſchool-phraſe a little, you plainly rob it. It is the writings of the apoſtles, the writings of the New Teſtament, and not the cloud of commentators, and Jewiſh traditions, that muſt determine whoſe right this text is, the Independents or yours: and if it be thus his, and the text itſelf ſpeak for him, though you come with an army, and take it from him, you hold it in unlawful poſſeſſion.

The *church* here muſt ſignify a ſociety, whereof the treſpaſſing brother, and the brother that tells him his fault, are members, and out of which the treſpaſſer muſt be caſt; and this cannot be a ſociety or congregation of rulers, unleſs we ſay, that diſcipline is to be exerciſed upon none but rulers. Now, though you ſhould manifeſt, that, by the two, ℣ 19. or three, ℣ 20. we muſt underſtand the elders of the church; yet, while you are not able to prove, that they are here, or any where elſe in the New Teſtament, impowered to bind and looſe, any otherwiſe but in the preſence, and with the conſent of the flock, whereof they are the immediate overſeers, and which they feed, not as lords, but as enſamples, you will never be able to manifeſt, that the word *church* here can bear your ſenſe of it. And ſeeing our Lord is ſpeaking of the kingdom of heaven, and of what was to take place in that kingdom, which you affirm was not ſet up till his reſurrection; you muſt find out the meaning of the word *church* here, by the writings of the New Teſtament after the Lord's reſurrection, and no otherwiſe. But I think I have ſome ground to ſay, that I find not the word *church*, in this ſenſe of yours, in all the writings of the New Teſtament; while yet I find it very frequently in a ſenſe which agrees excellently with the ſcope of this place. You cite Acts xv. 22. where the church is diſtinguiſhed from the elders, to prove, that it ſignifies the elders: and Acts xviii. 22. where it is ſaid, Paul went up and ſaluted the church, which you ſay muſt be the elders, becauſe it was impoſſible for Paul to ſalute the multitude of the members. But this requires much proof, as we ſhall ſee afterwards. And theſe are all your texts for a church repreſentative.

You find fault with me for affirming, That the word *church* always denotes a congregation; and would make the reader believe, that this ſaying of mine was an inference merely

merely from this, that the nation of Iſrael is called a *church*, and had one place of worſhip, p. 83. 84. But if you had not been willing to miſunderſtand my ſcope, *above*, p. 157. of the *Explication*, you might have perceived, that I was there laying a foundation for reaſoning in this manner. The word *church*, in all the unqueſtioned applications of it in the New Teſtament, denotes always one congregation; and when it is applied to a ſacred uſe, it ſignifies one worſhipping congregation, having one place of worſhip. The nation of Iſrael in the wilderneſs is called *the church*, Acts vii. 38. and it was one worſhipping congregation, having one altar. The antitype of that church, even the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, is undoubtedly called *the church*; and it is one worſhipping congregation aſſembling in that place where Jeſus the High Prieſt is entered, and having only one altar, whereof all the members are partakers. The congregations of the ſaints, aſſembling in one place, and partaking of the one bread and cup, and therein ſhewing forth the inviſible communion of the body myſtical, cannot be denied the title of *churches* in the New Teſtament; unleſs you that call the Jewiſh ſynagogues *churches*, go about to deny it, while yet you acknowledge, that the Chriſtian church was formed after the faſhion of the ſynagogues, and alledge, that the largeſt of the primitive churches might be ſerved with one altar, as it came to be called.

But you yourſelf affirm, that ſingle congregations are called *churches* in the New Teſtament; for, when you are commenting upon 1 Cor. xiv. 34. p. 341. you ſay, "What "can be more expreſs, to fix a plurality of congregations "here, than when the inſpired penman ſays, *Let your wo-* "*men keep ſilence*, not *in the church*, but *the churches?* "So, according to the expreſs letter of ſacred writ, we find "there churches in the church of Corinth; and what is the "amount of this, but that there was there a plurality of "ſingle congregations in one preſbyterial church? And "though, in the preceding verſe, there is mention of the "churches of the ſaints; yet this plurality of congregations "is ſpecified to the Corinthians, in that it is ſaid, *your wo-* "*men*, which reſtricts it immediately to the perſons to whom "the epiſtle was indited."

Though the falſehood of this gloſs of yours may appear abundantly from the text and context, and from what I have ſaid, *above*, *Expl. p.* 157. (which it was your buſineſs to confute before you had aſſerted your own gloſs with ſuch confidence);

yet it is beyond queſtion with you, that ſingle congregations are called *churches* in the New Teſtament. Now, Sir, when the queſtion is about the import of the word *church*, in a diſputed caſe, the firſt courſe we are to take in the deciſion of the queſtion, is, to know what is conſtantly imported in this word, in all caſes wherein the application of it is undoubted; and if ſuch an import be wanting in an application of the word which is queſtionable, it is a great prejudice againſt that application of it. Further, if the diſputed application of the word *church* be ſupported only by ſuch texts as may eaſily be underſtood in ſome one or other of the unqueſtioned ſenſes of it; then, till it be proven, that ſuch texts cannot bear the ordinary ſenſe of the word, they muſt be underſtood in that ſenſe.

You diſcover a peculiar genius upon the application of the word *church* unto the national congregation of the Old Teſtament: For you affirm, That the congregational ſhape of it is aboliſhed, and alſo ſuch a national ſhape as the Epiſcopalians contend for; though I do not know but they alſo may affirm, that their way, as to what reſpects government, abſtracting from the worſhip, is moral, and liker the national frame of the Old-Teſtament church than yours is. But you ſay, that ſo much of the national frame of the Jewiſh church, as is ſuited to the Preſbyterian national ſcheme, "is moral, "or *perpetui juris*, and was inſtituted by God under the "Old Teſtament for the exerciſe of diſcipline and juriſdic-"tion." Here I want proof for two things.

1. Let the divine inſtitution in the Old Teſtament be produced for "a national church in which are many particular "churches, united together in the unity of one viſible church-"government, wherein all the paſtors and rulers of theſe "ſeveral churches are equally concerned, without any par-"amount power of any one church, or the rulers thereof, "over another." This you ſay was inſtituted in the Old Teſtament; and in the proof of this you alledge, that the ſynagogues, where the moral worſhip and diſcipline was performed, were churches. But I very much want the proof of this odd aſſertion; and I alſo want to ſee the inſtitution of theſe churches in the Old Teſtament; and to know of you, if the church of Iſrael was a complete church, according to divine inſtitution, without theſe ſynagogues, where the inſtituted worſhip was not performed, and which do not appear in the firſt erection of that church, and which remain after that church is utterly aboliſhed? Next, you affirm, That all

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theſe ſynagogues, which you call *churches*, were united, and under one national and viſible eccleſiaſtical government. Here again I want the inſtitution for that union, and for the ſubordination of the ſynagogues, as ſuch, to the one viſible eccleſiaſtic government. And you need not tell me ſtories out of Jewiſh writers, or what was the practice of the Jews after the Old-Teſtament ſcripture was finiſhed, unleſs you firſt ſhew, that all their manner of worſhip and government then was of divine inſtitution. I likewiſe want inſtitution in the Old Teſtament for an equality of rulers in the one viſible church-government; and when you go about to inſtruct this, you may have in your eye 2 Chron. xix. 11.

2. The next thing you have to prove is, That this form of government, which you ſay was inſtituted, was alſo *perpetui juris*, or moral; and becauſe this would require more metaphyſics than you are maſter of, you ſatisfy yourſelf with ſaying, That no Independent can prove it typical. It will be no hard taſk for an Independent to prove the government of the Jewiſh church typical, as well as the worſhip, to them that believe Chriſt's kingdom in the true Iſrael as well as his prieſthood. But you muſt ſhew a clear inſtitution for a government under the Old Teſtament, before an Independent find himſelf concerned to make any inquiry, whether it was typical or not.

I have been tedious, beyond my firſt deſign, upon the inſtances that ſerve to ſupport this obſervation upon the criticiſm of your performance; but eſpecially touching the import of the word *church*; yet I hope to be the leſs tedious to you in the following obſervations.

OBSERVATION IV.

You miſtake the queſtion betwixt you and thoſe you call *Independents*, about church-members. I wiſh you had taken the *theſis* laid down for you in the explication of the propoſition: but it was eaſier for you to ſtate the queſtion in ſuch a manner, and lay down ſuch a propoſition to be proven, as might beſt anſwer to the old Preſbyterian arguments that were brought to prove, that real and inviſible grace is not the ground of admitting members of the viſible church. So you go about to prove, by ten arguments, as you ſay in the title of the ſection, p. 108. "That a credible profeſſion, and a "blameleſs converſation, are the grounds of admitting mem-"bers of the viſible church." But who ever ſaid, that none but real converts in the ſight of God, can be members of a

viſible church? I know no Independent that ever ſaid ſo; and whom are you then contending againſt? A credible profeſſion, and blameleſs converſation, is what you require; and what more is required by any to a viſible church membership?

But the true difference is about the meaning of theſe words of yours, *a credible profeſſion and blameleſs converſation*. Give theſe words an explication conſiſtent with themſelves, and according to the law of Chriſt, and I am not the man that ſhall differ from you. But I find, a profeſſion of the faith upon which I ought not to credit that the profeſſor is a believer, is your credible profeſſion. Your credible profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and blameleſs converſation, is ſuch as gives no man ground to believe charitably, that the perſon that has it hath any thing of the ſpirit of Chriſt, or of the true Chriſtian faith, hope, and charity. Your credible profeſſor is one whoſe religion is no more but the breath of his mouth, wholly a ſtranger to the inward workings of the Holy Ghoſt; without whoſe common operations, I think, "no man can "call Jeſus Lord," or make the ſcriptural profeſſion of his name, 1 Cor. xii. 3. Again, you ſay, there is nothing more needful as to ſuch who are baptized in any true church (you mean the church of Scotland for one, where the whole nation is baptized in infancy) but freedom from obſtinacy in ſcandal, and a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances of Chriſt. And you know what you mean by freedom from obſtinacy in ſcandal, in a nation going under the Chriſtian name, and where the clergy have more means than the word of God and ſpiritual motives to bring ſcandalous perſons to a ſubmiſſion. You alſo underſtand what you mean by a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances, in a nation where theſe ordinances are the cuſtoms of the country. And thus you make ſuch an account of your credible profeſſion and blameleſs converſation as agrees beſt to the church-members that we ſee in your national church, and that make up the far greater part of it. But would you have me to ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt is "the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of ſuch a "profeſſion?" and ſhall I believe, that there is no other profeſſion of his name required to make a man a fit member of a church of his, but ſuch a kind of a profeſſion as they that live in Mahometan countries make of Mahomet and his religion, and ſuch a profeſſion as is brought about in the ſame manner?

The credible profeſſion of which the ſcripture ſpeaks is brought about only by the influence of the word of God, the only

only inſtrument that the Lord put in the hand of his miniſters to make diſciples with; and it prevailed againſt all the wiſdom and power of man, and the cuſtoms of all countries, to raiſe a profeſſion of the name of Chriſt in the world, and to make viſible ſubjects of his kingdom. The word is not powerful even unto this end without the Spirit concurring in ſome way or other. But you contend for a profeſſion of Chriſtianity that does no way appear to flow from the power of the word of God; and it makes no odds as to your profeſſion, though the man that makes it be wholly a ſtranger to the inward workings of the Holy Ghoſt; the profeſſion of which the ſcripture ſpeaks intitled the profeſſors unto the charitable deſignations of *ſaints*, and *faithful in Chriſt Jeſus*; and, while they continued in the confeſſion of the faith, love, and hope that is in Chriſt Jeſus, they were ſo deſigned by the apoſtles themſelves, and the churches were *churches of the ſaints*.

But the profeſſion you contend for is ſuch as does no way warrant us to aſcribe theſe titles to the profeſſors, and your moſt ſpecious profeſſion has no claim to theſe. So keen are you on this point to gain it, that, for the ſake of it, you part with another, which, on other occaſions, ſeems very dear to you: for, p. 111. your words are, "And it is to be obſerved, that that which our Lord had in deſign in giving officers unto his church, was not for the perfecting and building up of a mere viſible church, but that which was inviſible; namely, the perfecting of the ſaints, and edifying the body of Chriſt, till they ſhould all come to the unity of the faith, and the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt," Eph. iv. 11. 12." I hope you will remember this when you ſhall again bring that text, to prove your catholic viſible body, for the perfecting and edification of which Chriſt hath given the goſpel-miniſtry. When you alledge, that, where the viſible church is called *the kingdom of heaven*, and by the name of *ſaints* and *faithful*, it can only be underſtood of the more valuable and better part, I want to know, how that more valuable and better part can be known by any man, ſo as he may call the church whereof theſe are members by deſignations proper to it. And, ſeeing faith and holineſs are no way ſhewed forth to man's eye in your right profeſſion of Chriſtianity, what ground has any man to ſay, that there are *ſaints* and *faithful* in any particular church whereof he happens to ſpeak? And, ſuppoſe a particular church made up of members upon ſuch a profeſſion as no way

way ſhews forth faith and holineſs, and one perſon in that church that is a believer, and holy in the ſight of God only, which is a ſuppoſeable caſe, will you ſay, that ſuch a church may be denominated *faithful* and *holy* becauſe of that perſon? And may you not as well ſay, that the family, or the city, or kingdom, where ſuch a perſon lives may be called *holy* and *faithful* on his account, ſeeing faith and holineſs are as little viſible in the church and its profeſſion unto the eye of man, as in any other ſociety of this world, according to your doctrine?

Faith and holineſs may appear to the eye of man, who can look no further than the outward appearance, where they are not really in the eye of the ſearcher of the hearts: and hence is the difference betwixt the *inviſible church* and the *viſible*; which is the outward appearance or repreſentation of that which is not viſible but in that repreſentation; but if faith and holineſs do not appear to man's eye in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, then God has no viſible church, no viſible kingdom in the world. And if theſe be viſible to man's eye in the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity, then muſt not thoſe who ſhew them forth in their profeſſion, be called by us the *ſaints* and *faithful*, unleſs we think evil, and judge their hearts? You make the members of the viſible church, and their profeſſion, ſuch as to have no title from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant, but in ſo far as he is their God, and they his juſtified and ſanctified ones: and for this, and alſo to prove, that the viſible church as ſuch is not within the new covenant, you cite Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. p. 111.

Here you eſtabliſh a difference very conſiderable betwixt that church where Moſes, and the prophets, and John Baptiſt, and the Lord, in the days of his fleſh, exerciſed their miniſtry, even the Old-Teſtament church, and the church of the New Teſtament. For, 1. All that church was within the covenant the Lord made with them when he brought them out of Egypt, whether they were juſtified and ſanctified truly or not; but none but they who are truly juſtified and ſanctified, and inviolably ſecured againſt apoſtaſy, are within the new covenant. 2. That viſible church had from God, by his expreſs law, a right to the ſeals of that covenant within which they were; and they that neglected theſe ſeals in that church were appointed to be cut off from among the people: but, according to you, the members of the viſible church under the New Teſtament have not any right from God to the ſeals

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of the new covenant. Are not here, now, two covenants, two churches, the old and the new, extremely different?

Is not here a vast difference by you made between the *old visible church*, and the *visible church of the New Testament?* And yet you reason from the old visible church as the same thing with the new, p. 119. 120. But has not God required a profession of the new covenant (of which we read Jer. xxxi. and Heb. viii.) to be made in the world, that it may be some way visible among men? Has he not called us to a charitable judgment of them that make the profession of it, which he requires, that they are within that covenant, and his people, his justified and sanctified ones, referring the judgment of their hearts unto him, and forbidden us to think evil? Has he not, by his law in the New Testament, annexed the outward seals of that covenant, which he hath committed to men to dispense, unto that outward profession of the covenant, which he hath subjected to man's judgment of charity? Who are they then that have a right from God to these seals; they that are known only to him to be his justified and sanctified ones, and within the new covenant, or they that are so, according to the rules of a profession laid down in his word, in the sight of men?

We find he has commanded his ministers to baptize all them that are made disciples by the influence of the word of the New Testament; all and every one of them that believe, with all their heart, that Jesus, who was crucified, and raised again, is the Son of God, and that gladly receive the word of the gospel testimony and exhortation, or the new covenant: and he hath warranted them to baptize the infant seed of such, whom he calls holy, and of whom he says the kingdom of heaven is, and to whom the promise of the new covenant, whereof baptism is the seal, is, as it is to their parent; and he has not commanded them to baptize any other. Now, if this command respect such only as appearing in his eye, his ministers can never obey it; but if it respect them whom he warrants his ministers to account such by his word, then the seal of baptism belongs, by his law, to every one of them, and none else but them, that, unto man's eye looking charitably on them according to the word of God, are within the bond of the new covenant, and God's justified and sanctified ones, whatever they be in the eye of God; who hath never appointed this seal to be dispensed according to the rule of his omniscience, but according to the rules he has laid down in his word, for a profession of the new covenant, and judgment

ment of charity thereupon, touching them that profeſs it, and their infant ſeed; who are to be judged of according to the parents profeſſion while infants, but according to their own profeſſion when come to years.

Every perſon that has a right to baptiſm, then, is viſibly, whatever he be really, within the new covenant, and one of God's juſtified and ſanctified people; and every one that is thus viſibly within the new covenant, and viſibly a member of the true New-Teſtament church, the body myſtical, has a right, by the law of Chriſt, to the ſeal of baptiſm, and none elſe; and we have no manner of concern with what men are inviſibly and in the ſight of God.

Again, we find the outward ſeal of the Lord's ſupper delivered to the diſciples in the churches of the ſaints, where the ordinance of diſcipline is placed, 1 Cor. xi. 20. 22. 23. in every one of which churches, partaking together in this ordinance, the union and communion of the catholic church, the myſtical body, is viſible, 1 Cor. x. 15. 16. 17. 18. The firſt of theſe churches was that with which the Lord himſelf aſſembled after his reſurrection, and from which he was taken up into heaven, and upon which he poured down the Holy Ghoſt, Luke xxiv. 33. 36. 49.—53. compare Acts i. 3. 8.—15. Acts ii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 41. 42. 46. 47. Theſe churches are made up of viſible members of the New-Teſtament church, the body myſtical, that are viſibly within the new covenant, and are viſibly God's juſtified and ſanctified people; that is, them that appear to the eye of man, according to the rule of the word, to be ſuch, by their own profeſſion of the new covenant.

The firſt church was made up of them that, being pricked in their hearts by the word, and by the word influenced to receive the goſpel teſtimony and exhortation gladly, and being thereupon baptized, did join themſelves to, and were received by the hundred and twenty, to continue ſtedfaſtly with them, with one accord, and as one ſoul, in the doctrine and fellowſhip, and breaking of bread, and prayers; and this in obedience to that call, "Save yourſelves from this untoward generation." If theſe perſons were ſuch in the eye of God as they are deſcribed, then they were really within the new covenant, and members of the inviſible church. But ſeeing this cannot be affirmed, if they were viſibly in the eye of men ſuch as they are deſcribed, then they were viſibly members of the New-Teſtament church of the firſt-born, and viſibly within the covenant; and that church, as a

church,

church, was viſible in their viſible union together as a church. This viſible church, and every member of it, had a title from God to that viſible ſeal of the new covenant, the Lord's ſupper; and ſo has every ſuch viſible church to the end of the world. The church at Antioch was the firſt of the Gentiles; and it conſiſted of them that, by the hand of the Lord going along with his goſpel, were influenced to believe, and turn to the Lord, and in whom Barnabas ſaw the grace of God; and they were added to the Lord in becoming a church, by the influence of his exhortation, "That, with "purpoſe of heart, they would cleave to the Lord," Acts xi. 20. 26. Now, did not theſe, whatever they were in the eye of God, appear to be within the new covenant, and to be God's juſtified and ſanctified ones? And did not the Lord's ſupper belong to them by right, when joined together viſibly, to partake of it as one body? Or, unto whom did it belong?

The inviſible church, as ſuch, cannot partake of the ſupper, nor can all they that appear to be members of it, partake of it either. Infants of believing parents cannot, nor can viſible members of it, who, by their own profeſſion, have right to baptiſm, partake of it by any ſcripture-warrant, without being joined to a viſible church: ſo that it is only the members of a viſible church, as ſuch, that have a ſcripture-title to that ſeal of the new covenant, the Lord's ſupper. Thus you ſee how, under your correction, I take upon me to differ from your confident aſſertion, that the members of the viſible church, as ſuch, have not any title from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant: and when you correct me in this point, I hope you will ſhew me how the members of the inviſible church, as ſuch, and as diſtinguiſhed from the viſible, can partake of, and be admitted to theſe ſeals.

As the profeſſion you contend for is a thing altogether foreign to the new covenant, and gives no man any title to the ſeals of it, and altogether foreign to faith and holineſs; ſo it is ſuch a thing as makes no man that has it an object of that peculiar love which Chriſt requires us to have to his brethren, his redeemed, the members of his body. Your profeſſion, that you plead for, can never exhibit ſuch a perſon to you. For while, on the one hand, a perſon known to be rebellious againſt the Lord, ought, according to your argument, p. 120. to be admitted a member of the viſible church, without any poſitive ſigns of grace; on the other

hand, when Chriſt requires his diſciples to love one another, as he has loved them, and calls you to love the brethren whom you have ſeen, you are ready to anſwer as thoſe, Matth. xxv. "When ſaw we thee," *&c.* How ſhould one of thoſe whom Chriſt has loved unto the death be ſeen? How ſhall I know my brother for whom Chriſt died? For it can only be ſaid of the inviſible church, that it is redeemed with Chriſt's blood; and that church is no way viſible to me, in the members of the viſible church that make the right profeſſion neceſſary unto church-membership. And as for the profeſſion that the Independents look after, it manifeſtly tends to open a door for hypocrites, and ſhut it againſt many of thoſe who may be the elect of God. And when I am forbidden to judge my brother, or ſet at nought my weak brother, it is unlawful for me to diſcern betwixt one whom the law of Chriſt bids me love as a brother "for whom Chriſt "died," though weak, and one who is not, according to that law, to be looked upon by me as a brother, or to form a judgment of charity about any man, that he is a brother "for whom Chriſt died."

Thus, Sir, you are for joining with them as church-members that are known to be rebellious againſt God, and for thinking evil of them that make the faireſt and moſt credible profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and for judging them; and pervert the word of God, to harden yourſelf, in making void the Lord's command of brotherly love, and rendering it of none effect to you, and to as many as your book can influence to think as you do. But though you alledge that the words, in the judgment of charity, are of no conſideration, Acts xx. 28. and ſay the text affords no foundation for them; will you alſo baniſh the judgment of charity from that text and context, from whence you go about to prove, that we ought not to form a judgment upon that head, whether a man be to us a brother or not? And how will you explain the 15th verſe of that 14th chapter of the Romans, "Deſtroy not him "with thy meat for whom Chriſt died," without the judgment of charity, unleſs you be for univerſal redemption? And if this deſignation was not due to church-members, credibly profeſſing the faith, by the law of brotherly love, while they continued in that profeſſion; what will you make of them that "deny the Lord that bought them?" 2 Pet. ii. 1. And if theſe words, *the judgment of charity*, can be of no conſideration, Acts xx. 28. then you may let me underſtand the force of the Apoſtle's argument there, to move the elders

ers of the Epheſian church "to take heed to, and feed all "that flock of which they were overſeers." He ſays, "Take heed to all the flock, to feed the church of God "which he hath purchaſed with his own blood." And might not the elders, according to you, have anſwered him, The flock of which we are overſeers is not "the church of God "purchaſed with his blood." For that is only the inviſible church, which cannot appear to us in the flock which we overſee. If we could ſee that redeemed flock, we ſhould take heed to it, and do it all the ſervice we can; but that is not the object of ſenſe, and ſo we cannot overſee it, nor take care of it?

I conceive, Sir, it was your buſineſs to anſwer my argument upon this text, in the explication of the propoſition, which proved, that the judgment of charity muſt be of ſome conſideration in it; and not to talk beſide the purpoſe, about univerſal redemption, and the controverſy with the Arminians, when it could not but be evident to any conſidering man, that the ſenſe of that text which I go upon, ſerves to overthrow any argument that can be brought from theſe words for univerſal redemption. And when I conſider as impartially as I can the 29th and 30th verſes, I have ſtill ground to believe, that it might be ſaid, agreeably to ſcripture-ſtyle, that all the flock at Epheſus was "God's flock purchaſed with "his blood." For that way of ſpeaking is the very ſame with what you have Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 1.; and is every way agreeable to the ſtyle of our Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, a particular branch of which the Apoſtle is recommending to the elders of the Epheſian church. Compare John xxi. 15. 16. 17.

The profeſſion of Chriſtianity you contend for, under the ſpecious name of *a credible profeſſion*, and *blameleſs converſation*, ſeems to me to be a thing altogether of another kind, than that confeſſion of the faith, and of the name of Jeſus, ſo much inſiſted on in the ſcriptures; even that which makes the confeſſors or profeſſors hated of all nations, and a man's foes thoſe of his own houſe; and which endears the profeſſors to one another, as brethren, and members one of another, and which has ſo many great and precious promiſes annexed to it, and ſo many grievous threatenings directed againſt apoſtaſy from it. As I take it, the profeſſion you are contending for, is ſo far from being of the ſame kind with this, that it is ſet up unto the baniſhing of it out of the world; and is no other but that form of godlineſs that was

shifted in by Antichrist into the room of the ancient profession, that was expressive of the power of godliness, and had a near relation to it. And that is a form of godliness not owing to the power of the gospel, but to the power of man; not shewing forth faith and holiness, nor making these any way visible in them upon whom it is: but it is upon them that are known to be rebellious against God; not manifesting redeeming love, nor the grace of the Holy Ghost, but rendering these utterly invisible, and banishing brotherly love, and the judgment of charity, from the profession of the name of Jesus; not exposing men to persecution from the world of the ungodly, but making the church and the world one, and extinguishing the old open strife for the faith once delivered to the saints. There were ungodly men that crept in unawares into the first churches, under the profession of the name of Jesus: but this form of godliness served unto the open entrance of the ungodly world, known to be rebellious against God, into the outer court of the temple, to defile it; and thus it was trodden under foot of the Gentiles, the clergy ruling among them as the lords of the Gentiles.

Against this form of godliness, that has no relation to the power of it, and taken on by the world openly rebellious against God, and denying the power of godliness, and doing their best to make it invisible in the world, the Apostle bends his discourse, 2 Tim. 3d chapter throughout; while he is foretelling the antichristian state of things, and foreshewing the antichristian clergy, the true offspring of the old Judaising teachers, who were Pharisaical in their doctrine of justification, pressed after a conformity to the Jewish church, and sought after a worldly kingdom, and set themselves against such a profession of the truth of the gospel as exposed men to persecution; and also the offspring of them that turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. Whereas you would have the Apostle there speaking only of turning away from such men as the apostles and the first Christian teachers were themselves accounted to be, by the rulers of the Jewish synagogues; and as those must ever be accounted in the world, who adhere to the word of God as their only rule, and will not turn aside to fables, and that turn away from them that have "the form "of godliness, denying the power of it," who must be the prevailing party for number, when the nations of the world pass under the Christian name. For upon that of turning away, you say, he had "a special eye to schismatical and false "teachers, who, by a specious form of godliness, endea-

"vour

" vour to ſeduce perſons from their lawful paſtors, (by the " law of the nation, as I take it), and carry them off from " the communion of the church (I underſtand, by law eſta- " bliſhed, or the pariſh-church) unto private aſſemblies and " houſe-meetings. This is manifeſt from the 6th and 7th " verſes. And it is remarkable, that the greateſt part of " their conqueſts were to be ſilly women, who, by the form " and appearance of their godlineſs, and the fair ſhew they " made of more than ordinary ſanctity, they impoſed upon " them, as being the weaker ſex, and generally of leſs judg- " ment, reaſon, and underſtanding."

While you thus maliciouſly pervert the holy word of God, to ſhew that men ought to turn away from the objects of your hatred, I think I hear a ruler of a Jewiſh ſynagogue, or a Jewiſh prieſt, in his zeal for the temple, ſpeaking againſt the apoſtles and their followers; or a Popiſh prieſt ſpeaking againſt Proteſtant teachers and their followers, before they came to have a national eſtabliſhment, or before they had drawn their form over a nation inſtead of the Popiſh form; or an Epiſcopal clergyman ſpeaking againſt the conventicles in Scotland in the laſt age. And they that pretend to be the true offspring of thoſe that were in former times thus ſpoken againſt, can abundantly diſcover the ſpirit that thus perſecuted, againſt thoſe called *Independents* now.

Though you are for their being church-members, whom we are not to believe to be diſciples; yet you are ſtill for ſome diſtinction between the members of the viſible church and the reſt of the world. And you make the enjoying of the word preached, the privilege of that viſible church, even as the partaking of the holy ſacrament. And thus you deprive the reſt of the world of the enjoyment of the word preached; ſo condemning yourſelf in the taking up of that poor old cant againſt the Independents, That a miniſter, according to their ſcheme, cannot preach, as a miniſter of the goſpel, to any but the flock to which he is paſtor.

If you had conſidered the explication of the propoſition, which you pretend to confute, you might have found, it is the judgment of ſuch as contend for what you call *Independency*, That every paſtor of a church is ſet there for ſpreading the goſpel in the world, as a light on a golden candleſtick, and bears Chriſt's commiſſion to preach the goſpel, as his miniſter, to every creature; neither can you ſhow any one poſition in that treatiſe, wherewith this is inconſiſtent. But your argument on this head goes upon the ſuppoſition, that

that a paſtor has not a commiſſion from Chriſt to preach to any as his miniſter, but them to whom he is a paſtor: and becauſe you do not pretend to be paſtors to more than that catholic viſible body of which you ſpeak, by the ſame rule, you preach only as private perſons to the reſt of the world, that are not of that viſible church; and ſo you make the preaching of the word to be the privilege of that church to which men are admitted upon the grounds whereon you difference your viſible catholic body from the world. But I thought you would have been aſhamed to bring this old ridiculous charge againſt them you have now to do with, till you had cleared yourſelf, as a paſtor of the catholic church viſible, of the ſame charge againſt yourſelf, as to preaching to them that are not members of that church; yet, to do you juſtice, you have done ſomething toward that, in making the enjoying of the preached word to be the privilege of the members of that church; and ſo the controverſy betwixt you and me will come to this, Whether paſtors be Chriſt's miniſters to the viſible church only, by Chriſt's commiſſion, Matth. xxviii. or to the world? I own it is very agreeable to your ſcheme, that men ſhould firſt, by means foreign to the goſpel, be turned in to the viſible church, and ſo be made objects of the goſpel meſſage and call; and I ſhall not call this altogether diſagreeable to the conſtitution of the church that had its beginnings in Conſtantine's days; but nothing is more diſagreeable to the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church.

As to the infant ſeed of believing parents, who are viſible members of the body of Chriſt with their parents, and by their credible profeſſion, and ſo have a right to baptiſm; they paſs out of the ſtate of the infant ſeed of believers, wherein they were to be judged of according to their parents profeſſion, when they become the objects of the goſpel-call; and cannot be the members of a viſible church, but by their own credible profeſſion brought about by the goſpel. You yourſelf require of them a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances of Chriſt; though yet, in another place, you affirm, "That he who is baptized, according to the com-"mand of Chriſt, has thereby a ſealed right to all the exter-"nal privileges belonging to that covenant of which baptiſm "is the ſeal; and this continues till it be forfeited by ſome "deed or action of the perſon," p. 153. which, if you pleaſe, you may prove, and then reconcile with what you ſay, p. 111. and p. 118.

There

There is another ſuppoſition of yours, by which you endeavour to fix another abſurdity upon the Independent principles; and that ſuppoſition ſeems to me to be this: That the heart-ſearching word of God, in the mouth of a paſtor, cannot convince and convert a hypocrite that is a church-member, and charitably judged a brother in Chriſt by the paſtor; and that he cannot, in preaching, call them in the name of God to be reconciled to God, or deal in a doctrinal way with the conſciences of his church, to convince and convert them, whom yet in the buſineſs of church-order, and in diſpenſing church-privileges, he looks upon as converted already. As this ſuppoſition of yours wants much proof, and is not altogether conſiſtent with a diſtinction of your own, p. 147.; ſo I am ſure it is inconſiſtent with the ſtrain of the doctrine of the paſtors of ſuch churches, in whoſe printed ſermons I have ſeen as much ſaid, and to as good purpoſe, for the conviction and converſion of the moſt refined hypocrites, as ever I ſaw or heard in any other ſermons; and though in all thoſe church-duties wherein they muſt act according to the judgment of charity, the Independents reckon themſelves obliged not to think evil; yet, in the diſpenſation of the goſpel-doctrine in the name of God toward the conſciences of men when they preach, they are not the preachers in the world that are moſt liable to the charge of ſewing pillows under the arms of church-members or others.

You ſeem to have a great prejudice at what you call *poſitive evidences*, and judging upon them in the admiſſion of church members; and I am at ſome loſs to underſtand what you mean by them, though I have heard the expreſſion frequently, among people of your opinion, uſed to expreſs ſome very ill thing. If you mean by poſitive evidences, infallible evidences of a thing that none but God infallibly knows, and can aſſure a man's own conſcience of with reſpect to a man himſelf, I think it would be a very great evil for a man to require ſuch evidence to found his judgment of charity concerning another man's faith and holineſs, or concerning his being an object of brother love: and I think he is bound by the law of Chriſt to form his judgment in this matter, upon leſs evidence. But if you mean poſitive evidence, in oppoſition to negative, which is no evidence; I muſt own, I know not how to form a judgment of charity, without ſome poſitive evidence. And is not a credible profeſſion ſomething poſitive? Are not thoſe things you bring from the fathers upon

on this ſubject poſitive evidences? Is not a credible profeſſion an evidence which I ought to credit for ſomething? And what is that but what is profeſſed? Is not then a credible profeſſion of the faith, love, and hope that is in Chriſt, or of Chriſtianity, a poſitive evidence of a man's being an object of brotherly love, which evidence ought to be the ground of my judgment of charity concerning him that he is a Chriſtian, a believer in Chriſt, a brother for whom Chriſt died? If it be otherwiſe, and if there be no evidence upon which I can charitably judge that any man is a brother for whom Chriſt died, then tell me, how I can evidence my love to Jeſus Chriſt in the labour of love toward my brother whom I have ſeen, and my love to God in my love to them that are begotten of him?

You own that paſtors are to make inquiry into the ſtate of the flock. But what are they to inquire after? Are they to ſeek to diſtinguiſh faith as it lies in the heart, from hidden hypocriſy there? That is an inquiry that I am ſure no paſtor is called to, or capable of; for no man has ought to do with any more but what is viſible to man's eye. Thus, while you moſt unjuſtly charge others with the crime of ſearching mens hearts, you yourſelf would ſearch it, or elſe conſtitute two kinds of viſible Chriſtianity, and you condemn the Independent, becauſe he rejects one of them as unſcriptural, and not to be found in the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, the ſcriptural confeſſion of faith being but one.

I ſhall trouble you no further on this head, but refer you to the explication of the propoſition; only I want ſcripture-proof for a propoſition of yours, *viz.* That a perſon, being overtaken in ſome fault, muſt be debarred from ſealing ordinances, till the ſcandal be removed according to Chriſt's rule; and yet he is ſtill a member of the viſible church, unleſs his obſtinacy occaſion his rejection by the ſentence of excommunication. Bring me clear ſcripture-proof for this debarring or ſuſpenſion from ſealing ordinances; and do not tell me of all orthodox divines, that is, all divines that think as you do, and that is yourſelf.

OBSERVATION V.

It ſeems to me that you do not attend to the proceſs of the argument about the nature of the church in Jeruſalem, the church in Antioch, and in Epheſus, *&c.* For when it is alledged

ledged by us, that the ſcripture language, in the deſcription of the church at Jeruſalem, makes for one congregation, you affirm it is impoſſible it could be ſo, becauſe of ſeveral things you alledge from other texts: ſo that the whole of your cauſe depends upon the proof of this impoſſibility; and till you prove it, whatever noiſe you make, you do indeed ſay nothing to the purpoſe. But, inſtead of demonſtrating this, you go about to put the Independent to prove; whereas he has nothing to be proven, till you inſtruct your impoſſibility; and then he will tell you how far he agrees with your gloſſes upon the texts that now ſpeak moſt plainly to him of one congregation. I humbly conceive you have failed in the proof of the impoſſibility of the church in Jeruſalem its being one congregation, unleſs you think the proof is finiſhed when you ſeek that I ſhould tell you how that church could meet in one place, from time to time, to obſerve the inſtituted worſhip; and when, upon my telling you ſomething feaſible or poſſible, you call for proof that it was actually ſo as I ſay. But ſeeing your whole ſcheme hangs upon the ſuppoſition of the impoſſibility of the church at Jeruſalem eſpecially its being one congregation, you muſt either demonſtrate this ſuppoſition, or, to uſe your own beloved phraſe, *beg the thing in queſtion.*

This ſuppoſition, from which your ſcheme is inferred, is itſelf an inference which you, and all Preſbyterian writers againſt Independency, draw from the number of converts in Jeruſalem, and of believing Jews, the diverſity of languages there, and the number of teachers. To make your ſuppoſition ſtand upon theſe foundations, you have theſe things to prove.

1. That all thoſe converted by the goſpel in Jeruſalem were members of that church. You know where you affirm, that the church in the ſingular number, ſo far as you can obſerve, is no where in the New Teſtament made uſe of in expreſs terms to denote any more than the Chriſtians in ſome city, except when the catholic church is meant. And I want that you ſhould inform me, how all the numbers that were from time to time converted by the goſpel in Jeruſalem, where the Jews throughout Judea and Galilee were ſtill reſorting, and where the Jews throughout the world were ſeveral times in the year coming to worſhip, can be ſaid to be only of the Jews that inhabited Jeruſalem? Were they the only Jews about the temple? or was converting grace confined to them? And do we not expreſsly read of a multitude that came from the cities round about, bringing ſick folks to

be healed by the apoſtles? Though churches be not mentioned throughout Judea and Galilee, till after the diſperſion; yet, when we come to ſpeak of impoſſibilities, it will be hard to prove it impoſſible that there were not churches throughout Judea and Galilee before. Probable conjectures will not do, where an impoſſibility is to be proven.

2. It is alſo to be made manifeſt, That there was no place, before the diſperſion, where all the members of the church could poſſibly aſſemble as one congregation. The ſcripture ſpeaks expreſsly of their meeting in the temple, and in Solomon's porch. Againſt this it uſed to be ſaid, that Solomon's porch could not hold them all, taking it for the porch of the temple, 2 Chron. iii. 4. But you have taken pains to tell us, that the true Solomon's porch could not only hold one vaſt congregation, but very many; ſo that you have turned this branch of the proof of your impoſſibility out of doors; only you would have your readers imagine, that there were ſuch partitions in Solomon's porch for diſtinct congregations, as there are for the ſeveral pariſhes in Glaſgow.

3. The next thing to be proven is, That there was no common language among the dwellers in Jeruſalem. That they underſtood different languages, ſeverals of them that inhabited that city, there is no queſtion; but it will not be eaſy to demonſtrate, that there was no common language among the inhabitants. And for what is ſaid of the people mentioned Acts ii. if words can ſignify any thing of that kind, they all underſtood the language of Peter's ſermon, even all that were converted by it.

4. You muſt alſo prove, That the twelve apoſtles, the then paſtors and teachers of that church, could not find room for their gifts of teaching and exhorting, and of preaching, in a church that aſſembled every day in the temple; and that they had not work enough, who, beſide their conſtant "labour "in the word and doctrine," in the daily aſſemblies of the church, and among the church-members, were bearing witneſs of the Lord's reſurrection, and preaching to multitudes, both about the temple and in private houſes, as occaſion offered.

5. It is next to be made evident, That, when the diſperſion was, and while the perſecution that aroſe about Stephen laſted, any more of the church remained in Jeruſalem than as many as could aſſemble in ſome private place, or even that the church did at all aſſemble in the very heat of the perſecution. In the proof of this it is uſually affirmed, that only

teachers

teachers were scattered abroad; and, when you say this, you must mean office-bearers, elders; for you will not allow, that any of the members of that church not in office, whatever extraordinary gifts they were endowed with, preached the gospel, however they might be called to it at that time. But though it be manifest, that they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word; yet it is most evident, that all they that were persecuted and scattered did not preach; unless we should say, that women preached; and then, I think, you will be in no strait to say, that all the members of the church that were men preached, Acts i. 3. 4. I have no reason to question, that the same thing is meant by the church in ℣ 1. & 3.; and it is plain in ℣ 3. that the church was both men and women.

6. It must also be demonstrated, That all the myriads of believing Jews, long after the dispersion, were members of the church that was then in Jerusalem, and was under the immediate inspection of the presbytery there. And you may likewise try your critical skill a little, for your diversion, upon the word *myriads*, to shew, that it always, in the New Testament, is to be taken to signify *ten thousands*; and that it must be so taken Luke xii. 1. where you find myriads in one congregation.

Unless these things be demonstrated, your supposition falls to the ground, and your constitution of the Christian church that is founded upon it comes to nought. And when we shall see them proven, then we shall consider what was the plan of the church laid down in Jerusalem to be followed in after-ages, and whether there were in that place distinct fixed congregations and sessions, united in a classical presbytery, and subject to it: and, till you be able to produce a pattern for such sessions in the New Testament, I will easily deny, that there is any pattern there for your classical presbyteries. For whatever kind the presbytery in Jerusalem was of, if it had not kirk-sessions under it, if it was not compounded of them, it was no pattern for your classical presbytery: and as I reckon you and I will agree, that the other scripture-presbyteries were of the same kind with that at Jerusalem; so, when we come down to primitive churches in the second and third centuries, we will find no presbytery there but the eldership of one church, that was served with one altar. But till you demonstrate your foresaid supposition, which I do not expect to see of a sudden, I must remain secure in the possession of as plain a truth as scripture-words have made it,

that the church in Jeruſalem did all aſſemble with one accord in one place: and if there was no preſbytery there but a congregational one, we need not go to Epheſus, or any where elſe, to ſeek a claſſis; I am ſure, not to Lyſtra, where, you ſay, was the preſbytery that laid hands on Timothy. I would be content to ſee how you make up the proof of a claſſical preſbytery in that place, againſt the author of the *Defence of national churches*, who affirms it to be a ſeſſion; for he brings Acts xiv. 23. to prove kirk-ſeſſions: and he alſo is of the mind, that the churches throughout Judea and Galilee were certainly congregational.

There are now three of you that have written for claſſical preſbytery, the author of the *Defence of national churches*, the author of the *Naked truth*, and yourſelf, the author of the *Original conſtitution of the church*; and I humbly adviſe you to enter into a concert among yourſelves, that you may fully underſtand your own ſcheme, and come to underſtand one another, and be reconciled among yourſelves before you write again, with the intolerable confidence you have hitherto ſhewed, againſt the congregational way. But how ſhould I expect that you will write conſiſtently with one another, while I think it is moſt eaſy to manifeſt, that there is not any one of you that writes conſiſtently with himſelf?

OBSERVATION VI.

The grounds you lay down for your arguings to prove the ſubordination of judicatures, are ſuch as do indeed ſerve to overthrow it, and to eſtabliſh the congregational plan as the only ſcriptural plan.

I. Your firſt foundation, which you call a noble one, is the nature of the unity or oneneſs of the viſible body of Chriſt; and upon this I offer the following things to your ſerious conſideration.

1. As you have not yet manifeſted any viſible body of Chriſt, but a congregation of the viſible members of his myſtical body coming together to the Lord's ſupper; ſo the oneneſs of ſuch a viſible body of Chriſt will never make out a ſubordination of judicatures; but, if it be well conſidered, does not appear to conſiſt with it. We may have a metaphyſical view of the univerſality of the viſible members of the myſtical body of Chriſt; but that this univerſality of viſible members is, or ever was at any time, one viſible church in a political ſenſe, or one viſibly organiſed body, is ſo far from being

being a truth, that it is evidently falſe in fact. And if all theſe viſible members of the body of Chriſt ſhould at any time happen to be members of a viſible body of his, all partaking of that one bread and cup; this is a thing altogether accidental unto Chriſt's inſtitution of ſuch a church or viſible body of his: yea, there are ſome viſible members of that myſtical body into which we are baptized, that are not capable of being one bread and one body in ſuch a viſible church, nor objects of its diſcipline, nor of acting any part as members of it; and theſe are the infant-ſeed of believing parents, of whom the kingdom of heaven is, as well as of their believing parents, and who are, by the expreſs word of God, to be accounted holy.

Now, a viſible church or body of Chriſt is united while it continues ſtedfaſtly aſſembling in his name with one accord in the doctrine, and in the fellowſhip, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers, praiſing God with one mind, and one mouth, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel, endeavouring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace, and forbearing one another in love, walking in an orderly ſubjection in the Lord, unto an elderſhip or preſbytery of their own chuſing, and maintained by themſelves, and obſerving the Lord's command, Matth xviii. 15.—20. The unity of ſuch a body of Chriſt is remarkable in the Lord's ſupper, wherein all the members are one bread and one body, being all partakers of that one bread; and this ſhews forth the union and communion of Chriſt's myſtical body, even as that bread and that cup ſhews forth his body and blood, wherein the myſtical body has communion, 1 Cor. x. 15. 16. 17 This unity of a viſible body of Chriſt is likewiſe manifeſt in its order and diſcipline; while the biſhops or elders do all agree, in the preſence of the flock, to bind or looſe in Chriſt's name, and therein unanimouſly profeſs their ſubjection to their one and only Lord Chriſt, and his mind and will manifeſted in his word, which is the ſceptre of his kingdom, thus ruling and leading the flock as examples, and not as lords over God's heritage; and while the flock unanimouſly profeſſes ſubjection to the authority of their Lord Chriſt in his word, in conſenting to the agreement of his elders, and, as one ſoul, concurring with them in calling on his name for binding or for looſing.

When you ſhall manifeſt, that the ſubordination of judicatures is conſiſtent with all this unity of a viſible body of Chriſt, I ſhall attend to you: but if, when it came in, under pretence

pretence of curing and preventing diviſions, it made more; and when it pretended only to conduce to the well-being of churches, it ſerved to deſtroy their being, you muſt excuſe me, if I ſay, that the unity and oneneſs of a viſible body of Chriſt, eſtabliſhes not the ſubordination of judicatures, but makes it void.

2. Suppoſing it were true, as it is falſe, that you ſay, p. 88. 89. "That goſpel-ordinances and church-privileges were given primarily to the univerſality of profeſſors; and that "particular aſſemblies of Chriſtians have their riſe merely "from the impoſſibility of their joining all together, for the "convenient adminiſtration of goſpel-ordinances, and enjoying other ordinary church-privileges:" I ſay, ſuppoſing this, unto whom does this gift of ordinances and privileges belong in the next place, when the univerſality of profeſſors cannot aſſemble in one place, but unto them that can conveniently aſſemble for the adminiſtration and enjoyment of them all? And what ſociety is it upon which the grant of all goſpel-ordinances and church-privileges falls, if it be not a congregation of the ſaints? There are the inſtitutions of worſhip, there muſt the Lord's ſupper be, and no where elſe; there are all the ordinary officers of Chriſt's appointment. Upon this ſociety, therefore, and none other, does the inſtitution of ordinances, and grant of church-privileges, fall, when the univerſality of profeſſors cannot aſſemble. And if you inquire, Why may not this grant belong to a ſociety made up out of theſe churches, and repreſenting them? I anſwer, It cannot; becauſe ſuch a ſociety, give it what name you will, cannot obſerve all theſe ordinances, and enjoy all theſe privileges.

Your argument for extending the government as far as it can be extended, will conclude as well for managing the Lord's ſupper as extenſively, and placing it in as large a ſociety as that wherein the paſſover was placed. For the more extenſively the ordinances are adminiſtered, the more agreeable it is ſtill to the primary grant; which was, ſay you, to the catholic church viſible; and ſo one communion-table, from off which the whole members of the catholic church in the nation ſhould receive the Lord's ſupper, and to which they ſhould, from time to time, reſort, as the Jews to the altar, is more agreeable, by your argument, to the primary grant, than a congregational one; even as a national aſſembly of rulers for government is more agreeable than a congregational one. But it is ſtill more agreeable to ſuch a catholic grant

grant of ordinances and privileges, that it ſhould fall next upon a congregation, than upon a nation or province. For thus it can be more uniformly obſerved and enjoyed, without any conſideration of the ſizes, and ſhapes, and diſtinctions of nations, and in an exact agreeableneſs unto the obſervance and enjoyment of it in an aſſembly of the whole profeſſors of the name of Chriſtian faith: ſo that, in ſeeing any one of theſe congregations, we may ſee the ſame things that we ſhould ſee if the univerſality of profeſſors were aſſembled for the obſervance of all ordinances, and the enjoyment of all church-privileges; and the ſame things that we ſhould ſee, if we ſhould go through all the churches upon the face of the earth, an aſſembly of the ſame kind, the ſame ſort of members, the ſame ordinances of worſhip, the ſame church-officers, the ſame order and diſcipline, and the myſtical body of Chriſt ſhewed forth in the ſame manner. I own this is the moſt beautiful view I can have of the catholic church, according to your notion, and according to what you ſay, of the grant of all ordinances and church-privileges being made primarily to that catholic body. And I ſee not that your argument can indeed prove any thing, if it be not this, that there can be no church but a congregation, unleſs the univerſality of profeſſors could aſſemble together for obſerving all goſpel-ordinances, and enjoying all church-privileges; and that would ſtill be no more but a congregation.

3. The ſcriptural unity or oneneſs of theſe churches, and of the catholic church, no way favours provincial and national ſynods, and the ſubordination of judicatures, and can be no foundation for them. Your catholic viſible body united, and under one viſible catholic government, I believe not; ſeeing it is not a proper object of faith, as not being revealed, and as being an object of ſenſe, yet never ſeen by any. I acknowledge freely to you, I have not underſtanding enough for the viſible union of this body that you contend for, except you could make one viſible paſtor and biſhop, or unanimous college of biſhops, over all the paſtors and congregations in the world, and one viſible place of worſhip for the whole body to reſort unto.

The ſcripture gives me ſome notion of the unity of the catholic church, the church of the firſt-born, which is deſcribed Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24. Rom. xii. 4. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 12. 13. Eph. i. 10. 22. 23. Eph. ii. 5. 6. 16.—21. Eph. iv. 4. 5. 6. 15. 16. I alſo ſee the Apoſtle accommodating his doctrine of the unity of that holy catholic church, the myſtical body of Chriſt,

Chriſt, unto a viſible church, a congregation of ſaints, wherein that catholic body is ſhewed forth, and exhorting the members, in their ſeveral ſtations, to walk according to it, and ſhew it forth, Eph. ii. 22. Rom. xii. 6.——10. Eph. iv. 1. 2. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 27. ; and ſo I likewiſe underſtand the viſible unity of a viſible church or congregation of the ſaints, ſhewing the holy catholic unity in the aſſembling of themſelves together ſtedfaſtly, and with one accord, for the obſervation of all the ordinances of Chriſt, according to his word, and particularly the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. x. 15.—18.

I alſo perceive, that in every congregation of the ſaints obſerving the word of Chriſt, the unity of the catholic body is viſible ; ſo every one of theſe churches, in the open obſervation of the word of Chriſt, wherein his authority is viſible, and which is one for them all, is as like another, as one copy of your book is like another, or like the whole impreſſion : ſo that, when I have the copy now before me, I have your book, and have no occaſion for gathering together the whole impreſſion. Thus the church in Theſſalonica was one with the churches in Judea, in the obſervation of that word, " which wrought effectually in them, when they recei-" ved it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God," 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. That word which was then delivered to them by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, and which we have now in the ſcripture of the New Teſtament, was as the ſeal. and a church in Judea, and another in the city of Theſſalonica, as two impreſſions of the ſame ſeal. And as this word, when duly received and obſerved, will make the churches one and uniform every where, ſo there is an oneneſs and uniformity in the oppoſition to it every where ; as our Lord has abundantly foretold, and as is manifeſt from 1 Theſſ. ii. 14.

As any church, then, is more or leſs viſibly conformed to that word of Jeſus Chriſt, the only uniting head and lawgiver of the church, it has more or leſs of the true viſible oneneſs and uniformity of churches. And though there ſhould be but one church in the world viſibly obſerving that word, that church has the true catholic viſible unity and uniformity. As it is the duty of the diſciples of Chriſt every where, to conform themſelves to that word, wherein his authority is viſible, and that as they ſhall be anſwerable to him their Judge, Lawgiver, and King, to whom every one of them muſt give an account of himſelf ; ſo it is the duty of every church to bring up itſelf viſibly to that word in all things wherein

wherein it comes ſhort of it, and to purge itſelf from every thing diſagreeable to that word, and ſo to come to the catholic unity and uniformity: otherwiſe no particular church could be condemned or approven by him the Lawgiver and Judge, for obſerving or not obſerving that unity.

And, what more can be ſaid of the catholic viſible unity of churches, I know not, unleſs I turn myſelf to the catholic unity and uniformity that took place in the Roman empire, after the congregations of the ſaints were firſt corrupted by the myſtery of iniquity working in them, or to ſomething near a-kin to that, and much of the ſame kind. And, what ſhould make you point to the Roman empire, in the beginning of your argument upon this head, p. 263. I know not, except it be to turn our eyes there, that we may behold your oneneſs of the catholic church viſible in perfection. But againſt all that unity and uniformity, and every thing that pertains to it, and comes of it, the Lord Chriſt will ſet himſelf, to conſume it "by the ſpirit of his mouth," till he deſtroy it utterly "by the brightneſs of his" ſecond "coming."

Yet men will be ſaying ſomething in favour of what remains of it, after ſomething of it is conſumed away, and propoſing wiſe ſchemes of their own, for yet keeping all the churches in viſible unity. As when one or more churches depart from the goſpel unity and uniformity, what ſhould remedy that evil? Is not a catholic aſſembly of rulers appointed, or ought it not to be appointed, as moſt meet and neceſſary for this? And if it ought to be ordained, certainly it was, unleſs we would reflect on the wiſdom of Jeſus Chriſt.

To this I anſwer, The wiſdom of man is fooliſhneſs with him; and if one church or more churches depart from the goſpel-unity, he charges this evil upon the church that ſo departs, and not upon any other, nor upon the rulers of other churches, whom he commends, if they do right, let another church do never ſo wrong; and he calls the erring church to reform and return; which if it do not, he will chaſtiſe it, or caſt it off, according as it deſerves, and that viſibly. There was a care of the churches in the firſt formation of them, and in the laying of the plan of them, by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; in whoſe place, as to all that is beyond the buſineſs of paſtors and teachers, the churches now have the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, unto which no apoſtle or prophet, though now on the earth, could add any thing, not ſo much as an infallible explication, which would be a new revela-

tion, under the pain of the adding to him of the plagues written in that book; ſo that there is no more uſe for theſe apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; and we cannot deſire them now, without ſetting at nought the work already done by them, and contemning the New-Teſtament revelation, now completed, as being inſufficient.

But if it be yet inquired, May there not be a common overſeer, or company of overſeers, taking care, according to the beſt of their knowledge in the ſcriptures, that the word be ſo obſerved in all the churches, as they may be one, and uniform according to it, in ſubjection to their common overſight and juriſdiction? to this the head of the church anſwers, "I walk in the midſt of the golden candleſticks, I "hold the ſtars in my right hand." And if any man be not ſatisfied in this anſwer, let him ſeek another in the place of it; and I could direct him where to find it in perfection, if he be content to take up with antichriſt inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt.

But while men are ſeeking to eſtabliſh the viſible unity that you are contending for, unto the remedying of evils in ſome churches, or in any one church, they do not conſider, that they are engaged in the ſupport of that thing that ſerved unto the corruption of all the churches, and their falling away from the true unity and uniformity. And after this univerſal falling away has taken place, and the churches are not fully recovered from it, no church can poſſibly be recovered, and bring itſelf up to the true ſcriptural viſible unity, while it cleaves to that unity you contend for, and while it departs not from it. Thus, I am of opinion, the nature of the ſcriptural catholic unity is ſo far from being a noble foundation for the ſubordination of judicatures, that it cannot ſtand with it.

4. The gift of officers for perfecting and edifying the body of Chriſt in the ſcriptural account of it, gives no ſupport to the ſubordination of judicatures, but unto congregations. Your argument, p. 88. to prove that this gift was not made to congregations, will, with equal evidence, manifeſt, that it was not made to your catholic viſible body: for you ſay, "Chriſt gave unto her apoſtles, who cannot be ſaid to be a "deed of gift to particular congregations, their commiſſion "extending to the whole world." And the whole world is of greater extent than even your viſible body itſelf. But that we may have a view of this gift or grant of officers, and the body to which it is made, let us conſider that 4th chapter of

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the epiſtle to the Epheſians, and that they may well ſerve for a key to Rom. xii. and 1 Cor. xii. You ſometimes acknowledge, that the body, for the perfecting and edifying of which Chriſt gave apoſtles, &c. is the inviſible church; and, whether you acknowledge it or not, it is very manifeſt, that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the myſtical body of Chriſt, with application unto the flock at Epheſus, wherein that body was ſhewed forth, and of no ſuch body as that you contend for. He ſpeaks of that body which is animated by one ſpirit, the Holy Ghoſt; has one Lord and Head, Jeſus Chriſt, in union with whom, as the head, it is all growing unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and one Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all; and ſo it is the church of the firſt-born. This is that church that is called in one hope, even the hope of the heavenly inheritance, and hath one faith and knowledge of the Son of God, wherein it is growing unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and ſo it is that church which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all. This then is that body into which we are baptized with one baptiſm, in the name of God, the Father of it, and in the name of the Son, its head, and in the name of the Holy Ghoſt, the Spirit that animates it. For the perfecting and edifying this body, the Lord and Head of it gave gifts unto men, Eph. iv. 10. 11. 12. 13. "He gave ſome apoſtles, and "ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and "teachers." The end for which he gave theſe is twofold.

1ſt, "For the perfecting of the ſaints," πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, for the joining together of the ſaints; or as you, I think, very well expreſs it, "For bringing in to joint "the ſaints." This is the ſame thing that had been declared by the Apoſtle, chap. i. 10. ii. 6. 15. 19. and iii. 5. 6. 7. The firſt work about that body, whereof the firſt-born from the dead, Jeſus Chriſt, is the head, and which is made up of ſaints, is the joining of it together. For this end, he that was raiſed from the dead, and ſet on the right hand, and given to be head over all things to the church, gave apoſtles and prophets; and the evangeliſts miniſtered unto them in that great work of gathering both Jews and Gentiles together, with the ſaints in heaven, in one in Chriſt Jeſus; and of the firſt formation of the viſible churches of the ſaints, which are for the ſake of that myſtical body, and ſerve to ſhew it forth till it appear; and therefore the Apoſtle, both here and Rom. xii. and 1 Cor. xii. accommodates what he ſays of that

glorious body unto ſuch churches. So the Lord Chriſt gave apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, for the joining together of the body of Chriſt, and the work of the miniſtry; for it is certain the evangeliſts are called the apoſtles miniſters, Acts xiii. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 5.

2*dly*, The other end for which Chriſt gave theſe gifts, is the edifying of this body, thus formed, till it be perfected; "for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come, "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son "of God, unto a perfect man." This ſuppoſes the formation of the body of Chriſt, which was by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; for it behoved the body firſt to be, before it be edified; wherefore the Apoſtle now calls it the body of Chriſt, when he ſpeaks of this edifying. This body is edified by the adding of the elect unto it, till they all be brought in, and by their growing up in it unto perfection, till they all be perfected in one; which edifying is ſome way ſhewed forth in the adding of believers to the churches of the ſaints, which is called adding to the Lord, and in their viſible growth together in faith and love, and in the profeſſed expectation of the coming of Chriſt, 2 Theſ. i. For this work of edifying the body of Chriſt, he gave paſtors and teachers, who muſt continue to the end, becauſe their work continues; and they were by the apoſtles, and their miniſters, planted in every church of the ſaints, and there ſet as a light in a golden candleſtick, to ſhine, and ſo to edify the body of Chriſt.

The Apoſtle, on this ſubject of the gift of officers, for joining together, and edifying Chriſt's body, cites the 68th pſalm, where there is a glorious deſcription of the Lord's aſcenſion, and his receiving gifts for men, and of the erection and advancement of his kingdom by the gifts: and, among other things there ſpoke of, I find ſpecial notice taken of the congregations: for, when the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the glorious marches of the King of the church, in the ſending of the rod of his ſtrength out of Zion, the true ſanctuary, the fountain of Iſrael, for making a willing people to himſelf among all the kingdoms of the world, that he might reign in the midſt of his enemies; and when he ſets forth the variety of gifts and offices accompanying theſe goings or marches of his, under the figure of the Old-Teſtament muſic, ℣ 25. he then ſays, "Bleſs ye the Lord in the congregations," ℣ 26. And I remember you once ſpoke to me with pleaſure of the application of the 27th verſe, by a certain author, unto the apoſtles. And it is remarkable, that thoſe very tribes are mentioned

mentioned of which they were: Paul was of Benjamin; and the brethren of the Lord, James, the Lord's brother, Gal. i. 19. and others of his brethren, 1 Cor. ix. 5. were of Judah; and the Galileans were of Zebulun and Naphtali, Matth. iv. 12. to 16. 18. Now, both the thing pointed at in the 24th and 25th verſes, and the thing pointed at in the 27th verſe, ſeems plainly to have a reference to the congregations; and I know not but they may be the holy places mentioned ℣ 35. And, truly, when I conſider the uſe that was made of the congregations of the ſaints in the ſetting up and advancing of Chriſt's kingdom by the gifts he received for men, I have ſome ground to think, that the New Teſtament makes us underſtand what is ſaid in this pſalm of the congregations. For, as the word of the Lord, his mighty voice, the rod of his ſtrength, ℣ 36. and Pſal. cx. 2. was ſent out by him from Jeruſalem on earth, the figure of the true, and from the glorious true heavenly ſanctuary above, the fountain of Iſrael, the true temple; ſo it was ſent forth from the congregations of the ſaints, in every one of which, the heavenly Jeruſalem, the church of the firſt-born written in heaven, is ſhewed forth, and made ſome way viſible.

When our Lord gave commiſſion to his apoſtles, and aſcended up from them, he left them in the firſt congregation of his own gathering; and when they had continued for ſome time with that congregation in prayer with one accord, and Matthias was put in the place of Judas, and, together with the eleven, choſen unto the overſight of that congregation, he poured down the Holy Ghoſt upon them in that congregation; and from thence went forth the word of the Lord with power in Jeruſalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt part of the earth. There was a congregation gathered at Antioch of the Gentiles; Paul and Barnabas, and others with them, prophets and teachers, are in that congregation, and there they are ſent forth unto the great work of the converſion of the idolatrous Gentile world, and of bringing preſents to Chriſt from the kings of the earth, and of making the Gentiles of all lands ſtretch out the hand to God, and the kingdoms of the earth ſing unto the Lord. In order to this, there was firſt a congregation or church of the ſaints raiſed at Antioch, by the word that came out of the firſt congregation; and from this at Antioch the rod of Chriſt's ſtrength went forth glorioufly, for the joining together of the ſaints, and making the Gentiles fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body with the Jews. And it is remarkable, that the apoſtles,

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as they were recommended by the brethren in the churches unto the grace of God in their work, and ſought their earneſt wreſtlings together for them in that work, ſo they gave them an account of their progreſs in it from time to time, Acts xiv. 26. 27. and God was glorified in the congregations, becauſe of his goings, Acts xi. 18.; and where-ever the goſpel had ſucceſs, there they took care to raiſe a congregation, and there was a new place of quartering, and from thence again founded out the word of God, 1 Theſ. i. 8.; and by them the apoſtles, and other preachers of the goſpel through the world, were ſuſtained, 1 Cor. ix. Phil iv. 15. 16. 3 John *&c.* When the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, had finiſhed their work, they left the world, and theſe congregations in it, with paſtors and teachers for edifying the body of Chriſt now joined together, and left that work in the hands of the paſtors and teachers of theſe congregations, who have a commiſſion to "preach the goſpel to every creature," and to "teach all nations." But the viſible church, of which they were left overſeers, is no other but the flock among them, and unto which they are examples, that is, their congregation.

With theſe congregations the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament were left, and were preſerved in them till the new Babyloniſh captivity; which came about by reaſon of their departing from that bleſſed rule laid down to them in theſe ſcriptures by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, and ſeeking unto themſelves another method of union than that word; and when the wiſdom of man came in the room of that word, and the power of the kingdoms of this world in the room of the glorious rod of Chriſt's ſtrength, and the heavenly power of his kingdom, then the Lord's enemies "roared in the "midſt of his congregations, and ſet up their enſigns for "ſigns, and brake down the carved work."

But, after the Lord has, by his marvellous providence, preſerved his word during the Babyloniſh captivity, and, by bringing it to the open view of the nations in their own languages, and by the gifts beſtowed upon men for the preaching of it, begun to conſume "the man of ſin" now of a long time, you are yet highly offended that any in the place of the world where you live, ſhould come out of Babylon, and return to the congregations of the ſaints, there to cleave to the truly uniting word of the apoſtles and prophets, in oppoſition to that dividing and deſolating mean of union that was ſet up in the place of it: and you make a great clamour about

about a deed of gift of officers given to a catholic church or body of Chriſt, for which there is no foundation in the word of God, by which the only body of Chriſt yet viſible that has a claim to that gift is a congregation of the ſaints. And however ſmall and deſpiſed theſe congregations may be any where in the eyes of them that ſay, "What do theſe feeble "Jews? will they revive the ſtones out of the heaps of the "rubbiſh? Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he "ſhall even break down their ſtone wall:" yet their Redeemer is ſtrong, and able thoroughly to plead their cauſe: "He "will not forget the congregation of his poor for ever, nor "will he forget the voice of his enemies, the tumult of thoſe "that riſe up againſt them."

II. You next argue for the ſubordination of judicatures, from Matth. xviii. which is as clear againſt it as any of the words that began to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf while on earth.

Here, becauſe our Lord ſays, that our carriage towards a treſpaſſing brother not hearing the church ſhould be as that of the Jews towards Heathens, you take occaſion to cant over a deal of ſtuff about the Jewiſh church, of which I have ſaid ſomething to you before; but as your inferences from theſe words, which do no way refer to the order of the Jewiſh church, nor to the manner of their excommunication, are the wideſt that can be thought of, ſo I reſt ſatisfied in the apoſtolic explication of them, 1 Cor. v. 11. compared with Acts x. 28. & xi. 3.; and pity you, putting yourſelf to the trouble of ſearching after, and taking heed to all the Jewiſh traditions or fables about excommunication, having no foundation in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, and from them eſtabliſhing a rule to yourſelf. And when you alledge, that your ſcheme of government was in the Jewiſh church, and that every thing elſe but it in the order of that church is aboliſhed, and that it is moral; you might as well make no pretence about the Jewiſh church, and eſtabliſh your ſubordination of judicatures upon right reaſon and nature's light, as does the defender of national churches: for it is your right reaſon that tells you what is moral in this caſe, and what not, and nothing elſe that I know of. I muſt ſay, you diſcover a ſtrength of imagination, when you find every ſtep of the Lord's law about offences, Matth. xviii. in the order of the Jewiſh church.

That the Jews were bound to reprove one another for ſin, there is no queſtion; but how you find the ſecond degree of admonition

admonition before witneſſes in theſe texts, that ordained facts to be proved in judgment by them that were witneſſes unto theſe facts, and that one witneſs could not bring any man to death, two or three being neceſſary, I cannot eaſily imagine, there being nothing like admonition in the caſe, nor deſiſting upon the treſpaſſer's hearing. And for the admoniſhing of offenders, that goes before the ſentence; you might as well have brought any texts to prove it to have been the ſame thing with what was injoined under the Old Teſtament: and as to what was injoined under the Old Teſtament, if a treſpaſs was committed for which the law appointed a man to be cut off, there was no ſparing of him upon his hearkening to any admonition; and when the prieſts, Levites, and judges, that ſat in the place which the Lord choſed, paſſed ſentence in a matter too hard for judges in the cities, (not the rulers of the ſynagogue), "in a matter between blood and "blood, plea and plea, ſtroke and ſtroke;" and if any man rebelled againſt that ſentence, it behoved him to die, or be cut off. Is this any thing like a church's admonition to a brother, manifeſted to be a treſpaſſer by witneſſes? which admonition, if he hear it, gains him ſo as no cenſure can be inflicted upon him, any more than if he had never treſpaſſed.

You find next an alluſion unto the firſt degree of excommunication among the Jews, in the binding of an obſtinate treſpaſſer, and counting him as an Heathen; but becauſe this firſt degree of excommunication is not to be found in Moſes's law, you go to your Jewiſh traditions for this. And ſhall I believe, that the New-Teſtament Lawgiver brought his law from theſe? No queſtion he is preſent with every one of his churches, and confirms what they do in his name, no leſs than in the Old-Teſtament church and ſanhedrim; but will this make it appear, that this law of his was tranſcribed from Moſes's law, and that hereby he deſigned to give us the conſtitution of that church over again? While you attend ſo much to the Jews, and cite them even as you do the Old Teſtament itſelf, I think you will be altogether inexcuſable, when you hear them complaining of the neglect of the rule, Matth. xviii. as one of the grounds of the Lord's deſtroying their city; if you, that own the authority of our Law-giver, live in the neglect of it, or continue in ſuch circumſtances as wherein you cannot practiſe it, and the more that you draw arguments from it for the ſupport of the ſociety wherein it cannot be obſerved.

There is a ground laid for your arguings from Matth. xviii. *viz.*

viz. That Chriſt has here granted power to the overſeers or elders of a congregation, two or more, to bind and looſe in his name. Here, then, before we go further, this is evident in the text; or elſe your reaſonings upon it, both as to the rule of proportion and the Jewiſh ſynagogue, fall to the ground; and you alſo prove it, chap. 5. § 2. from this text. And this being agreed upon betwixt us, I preſume to offer you a few queſtions upon it; as,

1. Seeing I hear not of two kinds of preſbyteries in the New Teſtament, and the word *preſbytery* is but once uſed with reſpect to the Chriſtian conſtitution, and when uſed with reſpect to the Jewiſh, ſignifies their ſupreme court, Luke xxii. 66. and Acts xxii. 6. tell me, if this be the ſcripture-preſbytery or not? Certainly the binding and looſing preſbytery, according to you, muſt anſwer unto the Jewiſh preſbytery; and the preſbytery in this text, or the two or three or more elders, you alledge, has the triple teſtimony and promiſe brought over from the ſupreme court among the Jews to confirm the cenſures. Is this court, then, the elderſhip of a congregation, the court that is called *a preſbytery* in the New Teſtament? and is the triple teſtimony and promiſe that was made to the ſupreme Jewiſh court, called *the preſbytery*, given unto this court, or not?

2. Have theſe two or more pointed at in the text any power here given them to bind or looſe by plurality of votes, or only by agreement? I think you have ſome way anſwered this already, when you are declaring the import of meeting and acting in Chriſt's name, p. 608. place 5.; and ſo you deſtroy the binding and looſing which is by plurality of voices, ſeeing the grant of power, and promiſe of concurrence, is only to them agreeing, and no otherwiſe: thus no deed can be done by them without coming to agreement.

3. Have the two or more, as many more as you pleaſe, any power here granted to them to bind or looſe in Chriſt's name any where but in the church, and with the conſent of the church, even the flock which they overſee, "not as lords "over God's heritage, but as enſamples to the flock?" Shew me from this text that they have; ſhew me an inſtance of it in the New Teſtament; and, till you be able to do this, you may ſpare your pains in proving, that the rule and government of the church is in the hands of the elders, which I never denied. But the queſtion betwixt you and me being about the nature of that power of binding and looſing, and the manner of its exerciſe, and whether it muſt be exerciſed

in a church conſiſting of brethren, (which is the place that the Lord hath choſen, and where he is preſent), and with the conſent of that church, your buſineſs is to let me ſee, that it can be otherwiſe exerciſed, by any precept or example in the New Teſtament.

You need not here tune up the old ſong about women and children, except you have a mind to divert me. You muſt firſt prove, that the infant ſeed of believing parents are, by baptiſm, members of any viſible church, and that they belong unto any ſuch church, whereof their parent is a member, any otherwiſe than as they are accounted the ſame thing with their parent. And as to women, you muſt be determined by your ſenſe of 1 Cor. xiv. whatever it be: and if you find them there debarred from all ſpeaking in the church, and alſo, ſeeing there are other ways of ſignifying conſent or diſſent than ſpeech, from any other way of ſignifying it; then you will ſay, that the whole church, as far as it is capable, according to the word, *conſents*. And I ſhall not condemn you for cleaving as cloſe as you can to the ſcripture. You may alſo thus debar them from ſinging of pſalms, that being one manner of ſpeaking words; ſaying *Amen*; profeſſing repentance in caſe of public ſcandal; and voting in the call of their overſeers; and ſo none of your heretrixes and liferentreſſes will have power of voting. But if you underſtand it of praying and preaching, or exerciſing any ſuch gift for edification only, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in the context; then you muſt let the two or three judge, with the conſent of the women alſo: for I do not think you will eaſily exclude them in theſe words, "If thy brother treſpaſs."

You meaſure a congregation of the ſaints, both men and women, by one of your pariſhes, and the generality of people in them; and the exerciſe of Chriſt's diſcipline in one of his churches, by the exerciſe of that diſcipline which takes place in your eccleſiaſtic courts; for which no man is ſufficient, without that wiſdom of this world which is plainly excluded the churches of Chriſt by his law: and you ſpeak accordingly about the ability of the brethren in a church, to conſent to or diſſent from the judgment of their elders, in their preſence and hearing, as to the mind of Chriſt in his word, touching a caſe that happens among them, wherein their practice, in obedience to the Lord's commandment of love, in ſubjection to which they are walking, is moſt nearly concerned. And ſo you do indeed declare them incapable to know, how to give obedience to the Lord's law of brotherly

therly love, and with whom they are to walk in the duties of that love, and with whom not. And this is one instance of the Antichristian arrogancy of the clergy. But if you reckon the people church-members, whose fault is it that they are ignorant of the manifest laws of Christ, upon which alone, and not upon doubtful disputations, binding and loosing must proceed? And by what warrant have you members of a church that are obstinately ignorant of the law of brotherly love, and of what pertains to it in a church?

As to your argument from the rule of proportion, I am not satisfied by it, unless you could let me see,

1. That the case is the same betwixt two or more churches, as it is betwixt brethren in the same church, or brethren Christians; and that the Lord Christ commands a church, or many churches, and their overseers, to do the same thing toward another church, as such, that he commandeth them to do toward their own members. I find churches charged every one with what is wrong within themselves; but I do not find them condemned for what is amiss in other churches, if they themselves be free.

2. That there is an institution for the court, that is, to bind churches when they transgress, and will not hear other churches. You have not manifested to me any such thing in this text: for, when you say our Lord here refers to the synagogue, which was but a congregation, and to its rulers; and when you alledge, that the same grant and promise is made to the court here spoke of that was before made to the supreme court among the Jews, a congregational presbytery is hereby made the supreme court. You may as well plead for the binding of kingdoms and commonwealths as for the binding of churches from these words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind;" and if you extend it further than unto all matters wherein a church is warranted by Christ to bind or loose its members, you may as well make it to signify every thing in the world. And though two or more elders, as many more as you will, be here authorised, by agreement, to bind or loose in a church, even the church whereof they are overseers, not as lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock; yet it will take a depth of metaphysics that I never fathomed, to infer from this, that Christ hath authorised any number of elders any otherwise assembled, or judging in any other manner, to bind or loose in his name. It cannot be manifested, that these words, as they stand in connection with what goes before, "For where two or three are gathered toge-

" ther in my name, there am I in the midſt of them," do warrant elders, more or fewer, to meet together as they pleaſe, in as many different kinds of courts as they will, and bind and looſe: for it will not be eaſily proven, that meeting in a court not of his inſtitution, is meeting in his name: and if theſe words be to be taken more largely than with a reference to what was ſaid before of the elderſhip of a congregation, then it is agreeable to the context, when we are taking them more largely, firſt to think of two or three brethren or church-members meeting together to do his will, and call on his name for any thing wherein his glory is concerned, and which he has allowed them to aſk; and there is no reaſon to confine it unto elders, as you do, when yet you plead for the text being underſtood in a latitude whereof it will not admit.

I am ſatisfied the law of Chriſt binds every profeſſor of his name to aſſemble in a church to his power, for the obſervation of his inſtitutions: and ſo every ſuch perſon is by him ſubjected to his diſcipline in that church whereof he is a member, and the elders of ſuch a church are commanded to take heed to themſelves, as well as to all the flock, and that with reſpect unto all treſpaſſes, the moſt public and hainous not excepted; and there is the ſame rule of diſcipline for a treſpaſſing elder and any other church-member. And when any the leaſt church warrantably binds or looſes its members, one or more, it is good in heaven, without being ratified by any other church or judicature on earth whatſoever; and when a church binds or looſes without warrant in Chriſt's law for ſo doing, it is of itſelf null as if it never had been, and cannot be made good by the ratification of a judicature conſiſting of all the elders on earth.

But if a church treſpaſs againſt Chriſt's law, then he judges and chaſtens that church, and calls it by his word to reform; and if it do not reform, where is the court, having juriſdiction, that he hath inſtituted for the reformation of ſuch a church, as the church in Corinth for inſtance? If a church perſiſt obſtinately in ſin, ſo as not to anſwer unto the end of Chriſt's inſtitution of a church, what court is it that then caſts off that church from being a church of Chriſt? inform me, if you find it in the New Teſtament. I ſee the elderſhip of a church, with the church's conſent, may caſt off their members; but for what I can ſee, Jeſus Chriſt has taken both the chaſtening and caſting off of churches into his own hand; and this is manifeſt in the caſe of the ſeven churches of Aſia. If you will not be content with this, but ſtill think viſible church-

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power acting over many churches neceſſary for remedying ſome evils that you are much afraid of, ſo that you cannot truſt them in the hands of Chriſt, who has taken the churches under his immediate care, I would then have you ſeriouſly to conſider the evils that not only may follow, but have actually followed upon the exerciſe of a viſible power over the churches, to keep them from hainous treſpaſſes, and in unity and peace.

III. Your other ground for the ſubordination of judicatures, *viz.* the apoſtolical example, Acts xv. is as clear a pattern for the congregational way, and ſo againſt the ſubordination of judicatures, as is to be found in any one paſſage in the whole book of the Acts: and the more I conſider that paſſage, I wonder the more how it comes to be ſo much inſiſted on as a pattern for a ſynod of any kind, either Roman, Scottiſh, or New Engliſh.

When you conſider and anſwer what I ſay on this paſſage in my remarks on *The Defence of national churches*, and in my ſpeech before the commiſſion, I will know better how to deal with you upon it, and where your main pinch lies. But, as I can now take you, in the difference betwixt you and me about the nature of this court, you ſeem to depend much in your belief of its being a ſynodical meeting, upon your ſenſe of the word *church*, as it ſtands in this chapter, and upon this, that Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe that came with them from the church in Antioch, were members of that company by which the decrees were ordained. When the queſtion is, Whether this was a congregational or a ſynodical meeting? it is manifeſt, very much depends upon the ſenſe of the word *church*, or what we are to underſtand by it here: and if this remain doubtful, after all that can be ſaid upon it, the caſe is doubtful; but if it can be clearly manifeſted what is the meaning of the church here, it will do much to determine the queſtion. It is very plain the church is diſtinguiſhed from the elders, as the elders are from the apoſtles; ſo that by *the church* you and I will agree to underſtand ſomething elſe than the elders in Jeruſalem, or the preſbytery of the church in Jeruſalem, who ſay to Paul, Acts xxi. 18 25. "We have "written and concluded:" for, as I can take your meaning, you would have us by *the church* to underſtand *the commiſſioners from Antioch*, and *from Syria*, and *Cilicia*, church-officers that met with the preſbytery of Jeruſalem.

Now let us conſider all the evidence that can enter our minds from this paſſage, and ſee if it can poſſibly bear this meaning,

meaning. It is plain, the only commiſſioners we read of here are Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe with them from Antioch; and whether theſe, or any other commiſſioners you may dream of from other places, be or can be intended in this deſignation, we may ſee by conſidering the whole paſſage. We find the church, and the apoſtles and elders, receiving the commiſſioners from the church in Antioch, Acts xv. 4. and if this be the ſame church that concurred with the apoſtles and elders in deciding the queſtion, and ſending the epiſtle and meſſengers to Antioch, then it will be evident beyond contradiction, that Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from Antioch, were not of that church. If it be not the ſame church that ſent the epiſtle to Antioch, then let me ſee what occurs in this chapter to afford me any ſhadow of a ground to think that it is not; mean time it muſt be acknowledged, that the church in ℣ 4. is the church in Jeruſalem under the overſight of the preſbytery there. We find the whole church, with the apoſtles and elders, ℣ 22.; and it is manifeſt this church, whatever it was, concurred with the apoſtles in their deciſion of the queſtion, and ordaining the decrees written in the letter to Antioch. I make no doubt to agree with you in ſaying, that *the whole church* there is the ſame thing with *the brethren* in whoſe name the epiſtle was written, ℣ 23. Neither do I queſtion, that this *whole church* is there where *the whole multitude* is ſpoke of, ℣ 12.

Now this whole church, this company of brethren, was a company to which the account of the miracles and wonders God had done among the Gentiles by Paul and Barnabas was news, and to which the diſturbance made at Antioch by the falſe teachers and their doctrine was known only by hearſay, and that from Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from Antioch, ℣ 12. 23. 24. "All the multitude gave audience to "Paul and Barnabas, declaring what miracles, *&c.* The a-"poſtles, and elders, and brethren ſend greeting.—Foraſ-"muchas we have heard, that certain—have troubled you "with words," *&c.* The whole church, or the brethren, with the apoſtles and elders, are a company from which the falſe teachers went out, that troubled the brethren in Antioch and other places, and raiſed the queſtion which occaſioned the coming up of the commiſſioners, and cauſed this meeting, ℣ 23. 24. "The apoſtles, and elders, and brethren "ſend—unto the brethren—in Antioch, and Syria, and "Cilicia. Foraſmuchas—certain which went out from us "have troubled you with words,—to whom we gave no

"ſuch

"such commandment." The whole church, or the brethren, with the apostles and elders, are Jews, plainly distinguishing themselves from the brethren which are of the Gentiles, even those in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, ℣ 23. "The "apostles, and elders, and brethren, send unto the brethren "which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Ci-"licia." The whole church, or the brethren with the apostles and elders, is a company expressly distinguished from Paul and Barnabas, commissioners from Antioch, and sending men of themselves messengers to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, and with the letter, for greater security to tell them the same things by mouth, ℣ 22. "Then pleased it the "apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen "men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and "Barnabas," *&c.*

Now, Sir, draw the conclusion yourself, and say, whether the whole church here distinguished from the presbytery of Jerusalem be the commissioners from Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, or the church under the oversight of the elders in Jerusalem? and then I will know whether you have the regard you pretend to scripture-consequences, when I try you upon a consequence the neareſt and shorteſt you can easily desire; yea, I will know your regard to plain scripture words.

You make no question but Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of the church in Antioch that came with them, were members of that company by which the decrees were ordained, and gave their suffrage in what was determined, as a part of that ecclesiastic body. And it is worth notice how you make up this ecclesiastic body: "There is a clear discovery," say you, "of the members constitutive of this synod, in order to "consider the question referred to them,——namely, from "the presbyterial church of Jerusalem, the apostles and pres-"byters, ℣ 6.; from the church of Antioch Paul and Bar-"nabas, and others sent with them by the public authority "of that church, ℣ 2. 12." Thus to make it look as like one of your synods as may be, you speak as if you imagined, that the apostles and elders sat there as delegates from the presbytery in Jerusalem, and so were on the same footing with those from Antioch; or at least, you would have your reader imagine so. But it seems very plain, that the presbytery of Jerusalem sat full there, and the apostles were with them; and that Paul and Barnabas being sent up to them with a question, after hearing of it, and some discourse in the church

church of Jeruſalem about it, they held a meeting for the purpoſe of deciding it.

Now that Paul and Barnabas were not members of the court that came together to decide this queſtion, and that they were not of that company which ordained the decrees, is to me very clear from theſe words: ℣ 22. "Then it pleaſed the apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend "choſen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul "and Barnabas, Judas ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief "men among the brethren, and wrote letters by them." And the whole ſtrain of the epiſtle diſtinguiſhes Paul and Barnabas evidently from the company by which the dogmas were judged. And though it behoved Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe with them, to be preſent, and propoſe their queſtion, and give information, which they did; yet I can find no mention of their giving any judgment or ſuffrage. I ſee Peter giving his judgment, and James his, and the apoſtles and the elders agreeing, and the whole church concurring with them; but as Paul and Barnabas are not of that company, ſo I find them doing nothing there but informing and narrating matters of fact, without giving any judgment. The uſe they were for in that meeting is intimated in the epiſtle, wherein they at Jeruſalem ſignify to them at Antioch, that they had been duly informed by their meſſengers, and that they had depended on and gone upon their information; and whereas their authority had been attacked by the falſe teachers, they teſtify their regard to them, and approbation of them; and, to remove all ground of ſuſpicion, they ſend men of their own company along with them to Antioch.

From all which there is not the leaſt ground to imagine, that Paul and Barnabas ſat members of that court, and judges in that queſtion there, but the cleareſt ground to think that they did not. And till you prove they gave their ſuffrage in what was determined, as a part of that eccleſiaſtic body, may I not inquire, where is the ſynod in Acts xv. that has been ſo much talked of both by Papiſts and national Proteſtants? Well, ſpeak of a ſynod who will, I reſolve to ſpeak only of the preſbytery in Jeruſalem, where were the apoſtles, in whoſe ſtead we have now the New Teſtament, till once you prove, that Paul and Barnabas were members of that court, and joined with the elders in Jeruſalem in exerciſing juriſdiction over the churches in Jeruſalem and Antioch.

The preſbytery of Jeruſalem then came together, the apoſtles and they, for to conſider of this matter; and how did they

they come together? or where? the particular place is not mentioned; but Acts xv. makes it evident, they aſſembled in the church, which is the true place that the Lord hath choſen for a New-Teſtament preſbytery, to gather together in his name, to make deciſions, and paſs ſentences in whatever place of the earth it happen to be; and here they have the promiſe of his preſence, "who walks in the midſt of the "golden candleſticks, and holds the ſtars in his right hand." There needs no conſequence be drawn to prove, that the whole church was preſent with their preſbytery at the making of this deciſion; and what is the plaineſt neareſt conſequence from this, but that the whole church in Jeruſalem was but one congregation, and that the preſbytery in Jeruſalem was but the preſbytery of a congregation? Further, How did this preſbytery make this great deciſion? by plurality of voices, or by agreement? with the conſent of the church, or without it? Let the text anſwer, ẏ 22. "Then "pleaſed it the apoſtles and elders, with the whole church."

This was the way the apoſtles proceeded from the beginning, in all their actings in the church at Jeruſalem; they determined all things with the conſent of the people, and did not diſdain to ſatisfy them as to all their conduct, Acts i. Acts vi. Acts xi. 1.—4. So that what was done by them is ſaid to be done by the church, according to Matth. xviii. Acts xi. 22. This was ſo laid in the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, that, however the myſtery of iniquity wrought in the churches before the days of Cyprian, it was not then wrought out of their conſtitution: for he ſays, Epiſt. 6. *Ad clerum de cura pauperum et confeſſorum,—Ad id vero quod ſcripſerunt mihi com-preſbyteri noſtri, Donatus et Fortunatus, Novatus et Gordius, ſolus reſcribere nihil potui; quando a primordio epiſcopatus mei ſtatuerim, nihil ſine conſilio veſtro,* et ſine conſenſu plebis meæ, *privata ſententia gerere. Sed cum ad vos per Dei gratiam venero, tunc de iis quæ vel geſta ſunt, vel gerenda, ſicut honor mutuus poſcit, in commune tractabimus.* He had a very plain pattern for this laid before him by the apoſtles in the church at Jeruſalem: and while men have been diligently inquiring into Acts xv. to find a pattern for a thing for which there is no pattern there, I wonder much, that, from Acts xv. 22. compared with Acts xvi. 4. they have not perceived, that the judgment, or determination, or ſentence of a Chriſtian preſbytery is, "What pleaſes them, with the whole church of "which they are overſeers."

This was the greateſt deciſion we read of in the New Teſtament, the greateſt ſentence or determination that was in any Chriſtian aſſembly where the apoſtles were; and this was the firſt part of the New Teſtament that was committed unto writing, and delivered unto the churches to keep; and in this writing the churches had a copy caſt unto them, in the firſt church, for their method of procedure in all their affairs and manner of judging. Now, if the greateſt deciſion we read of in the New Teſtament, and wherein all the churches were concerned, was made by a congregational preſbytery, or by a congregational church; what is the conſequence of this, but that there is no eccleſiaſtic court on earth above ſuch a church, and ſuch a preſbytery? As to the reaſons why this queſtion was ſent to this church, and determined there, you may ſee my ſpeech before the commiſſion; which, if you conſider, you will ſee, that no conſequence can be drawn from Acts xv. for the juriſdiction of one church over another. Upon the whole, may I not appeal to the conſcience of any unprejudiced perſon, (though indeed there are few ſuch in this matter) whether the pattern Acts xv. eſtabliſhes ſynods and the ſubordination of judicatures, or overthrows them, and eſtabliſhes the congregational way of doing?

I ſhall trouble you no further at this time with obſervations upon your performance; only that your prejudice againſt congregational principles ſeems to me to be this, that, according to them, the Chriſtian religion cannot be national, and laid in the conſtitution of the kingdoms of this world, and a Chriſtian national uniformity cannot be eſtabliſhed unto the cutting off of hereſy and ſchiſm with heretics and ſchiſmatics, by the power of thoſe kingdoms. But, on this very account, theſe principles appear to me to be true Chriſtian principles; and, as to this, I deſire you may take the trouble to read and conſider what I have written on John xviii. 36. 37.

And now, Sir, when you have impartially conſidered what is above ſaid, together with what you find in my former papers, if you ſtill find me miſtaken, pity me, pray for me, and inform me better from the word of God, and I will be obliged to you; and if you conceive, that you have received any perſonal injury from me, convince me of it, and I ſhall endeavour to confeſs my fault, and aſk your forgiveneſs, as I deſire to forgive all you have done or ſaid at any time, or in your book, againſt me. But if you receive any conviction from what I have ſaid, do not ſtifle your convictions, do not reſiſt the truth, nor detain it in unrighteouſneſs. Your

honour,

honour, and the honour of your book, which you may conceive to be by me attacked, and which I am ſure cannot be much hurt by one in my circumſtances, is but a poor thing in compariſon with that honour that cometh from God only. If I have been doing nothing elſe but making ſuch an attack as I am capable to make upon your credit as an author, I own I have been very idle, and very ill employed; but if I have been obliged to undertake this taſk, and give you this trouble, only for the ſake of the truth, and as a debt I owe to the truth, oppoſed by you, then I deſire it may overcome you, as it has done me, that we may be fellow-helpers to the truth; and I am confident your yielding to it will be your honour in the day of the Lord. "That your eye may be "ſingle, and your whole body full of light, and that you "may not be conformed to this world, but transformed by "the renewing of your mind, to prove what is that good, "and acceptable, and perfect will of God; and that his "word may be a light to your feet, and a lamp to your "paths, making you wiſer than your teachers, and affording "you liberty in keeping his precepts," is the prayer of,

SIR,

Your ſincere well-wiſher, and

Dundee, Sept. 9. 1730.

Friend to ſerve you in the Lord,

JOHN GLAS.

A Second Letter to Mr AYTONE. Containing, Remarks upon his *Review of the Observations on the Original Constitution of the Church.*

[First published in the year 1731.]

Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them? Jer. viii. 9.

SIR,

I Have seen your letter to me since it has been printed; and though I am not of the mind that it deserves an answer, which it also seems to forbid, and though I have little hope that any thing coming from my pen can have influence upon your understanding; yet, not knowing but some good end may be reached, even upon you, by the reply I am now making, I have therefore undertaken this task; and, in the performance of it, though I cannot promise upon myself, yet I wish I may be preserved from every thing that may unjustly provoke you, and so mar the end I have in view.

My principles touching Christ's institution of a visible church, and the plan laid down to us in the New Testament, were fairly stated, and their foundation in the New Testament from which they were taken, was plainly pointed out in *The explication of the proposition.* The scheme of principles there laid down, though it contains the main substance, and the best of that for which those called *Independents* contended of old, against them that are called *Presbyterians*; yet is not liable to all the objections that were framed by the Presbyterians against the Independents; nor is it capable of all the consequences that were drawn formerly from the manner of maintaining the congregational scheme, or from the concessions made by the Independent writers. Yet the author of *The defence of national churches*, and you after him, have taken that Independent scheme as it was the thesis formerly impugned by your writers, as answering best unto the common arguments. But I, not finding myself concerned to maintain any other scheme of principles but my own, nor to answer for consequences drawn from any other positions or concessions

conceſſions but my own, gave my thoughts as briefly and clearly as I could upon thoſe common objections, only as they ſeemed to me to lie againſt what had been by me advanced. And this I did in my remarks on *The defence of national churches*; wherein, though I treated with ridicule ſome things that are truly ridiculous in that defence, and in the paper intitled, *The naked truth*; yet I laid down ſufficient grounds for anſwers unto all the objections againſt my principles that I have yet ſeen: ſo that I am convinced, if you had ſeriouſly conſidered what is there offered, a great part of your book might have been ſpared. But your book gave me occaſion to ſpeak more particularly and fully, what I had ſaid with more brevity before, and to ſhow where the proof fails in arguings, that ſeemed to have any foundation in ſcripture, and likewiſe how croſs theſe arguings are to the ſcriptures, and even to ſome principles maintained by yourſelves.

When I publiſhed my *Remarks on the defence of national churches*, I, at the ſame time, put to the preſs *An explication of our Lord's teſtimony concerning his kingdom before Pilate*; wherein I endeavoured, as ſhortly and plainly as I could, to give an account of the ſpiritual and heavenly nature of the kingdom of Chriſt, diſtinct from the kingdoms of this world, and from the ancient kingdom of God in Iſrael, the earthly figure of this heavenly thing; and likewiſe of the difference betwixt the New Teſtament and the Old, and of the reference of the one to the other, with reſpect to the kingdom of Chriſt. It was the view I had of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, that ſet me free from the prejudices I laboured under, with reſpect to his inſtitution of goſpel-churches, and diſpoſed me to attend to the ſcripture-evidence for the principles I now profeſs and practiſe, as only agreeable to the Old-Teſtament revelation, infallibly explained in the New, and to the nature of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt: I therefore publiſhed that book, well knowing, that what I ſaid of a viſible church could not be attended unto without prejudice; or indeed well underſtood, without a decerning of the nature of the kingdom of Chriſt; but a true decerning of that would make the other plain and eaſy.

None of you have yet attempted to give any anſwer to that book, though it cannot but appear to you; and I gave you a hint of it in the cloſe of the obſervations, that if I be in a miſtake, the foundation of it is laid forth in that book, as I clearly ſee the foundation of all your oppoſition unto the principles profeſſed by me, touching the viſible ſtate of Chriſt's kingdom

kingdom in this world, is laid in ignorance of, and inadvertency to the nature of his kingdom, as manifeſted in that book by the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament: till we be, therefore, at one about this matter, we can never come together upon the queſtions now in debate betwixt you and me; and ſo I once more recommend to your ſerious ſtudy the ſcheme of principles declared in that book, which, if you overthrow, you will prepare me to receive conviction from what you alledge againſt the congregational way, and in behalf of national churches.

When I ſtood before the commiſſion, ready to receive a ſentence of depoſition from the miniſtry of the goſpel, for profeſſing and practiſing congregational principles, after I had profeſſed and practiſed the national ones, I laid before my judges a ſhort ſtate of my difference from them in that matter, and a ſum of the reaſons of that difference, which if you, or any other, had but fairly impunged, the controverſy might have been brought to a clear and ſhort iſſue; but it ſeems you had not occaſion to peruſe that ſpeech before your book was gone to the preſs; and now, when you have peruſed it, you paſs a general cenſure upon it, which is, no doubt, your judgment; but you have not brought forth the grounds of your judgment, that the appearance of reaſon and revelation, which you muſt own had weight with me, might ſeem as little in my eye as in yours; yet this had been a greater ſervice done to your fellow-creature, though more laborious than your cenſure. You have indeed excerpted a few things out of that ſpeech, and treated them as you ſaw good, as I ſhall notice in the cloſe: but it has not been your deſign to attempt ſo much as a ſhort anſwer to the appearance of revelation and reaſon, that is ſtill to be found there.

Your review is upon the obſervations, and follows the order of them, and ſo directs my courſe in obſerving upon it: I ſhall therefore follow upon them, taking notice chiefly where your eye fixes on any part of the ſcripture, which, I am ſtill of the mind, muſt only decide this controverſy, and it is reaſonable we ſhould hear its deciſion. I am obliged to ſay in the entry, that my obſervations, at which you ſeem not a little offended, are very much ſtrengthened and confirmed to me by your review; and whether they will be ſo to the attentive reader, if any ſuch there be, the event will declare.

OBSER.

OBSERVATION I.

My first observation touched the manner of writers for classical presbytery against the Independents, and your conformity to them, which I blamed; and I gave several instances.

The first, *viz.* Flying to human authority in the pinch where scripture-evidence is desired, you have verified abundantly in your review, where you tell of Piscator, Parcus, Calvin; great names, I own, but very ill used, where they serve only to fill up a vacancy of proof. You make some apology for using the authority of Dr Owen, when you say, "That "in so doing you take an argument from the mouth of an "adversary;" though yet you would have it believed, his judgment was stronger in favour of Presbytery than Independency. As to which I shall only say, I know his judgment best by his writings; and I wish I had such Presbyterians to do with as the Doctor was, and such congregations as was his church, to which you may see his letter in his sickness, printed in the folio edition of his sermons 1721. But if I were to study conformity to you in this business about authors, and take what you call *an argument from the mouth of adversaries*, I might tell you of the Scots confession of faith, that owns no other church but the mystical body, and a single congregation. I might direct you to Calvin on Acts ii. 46. and v. 12. 13. and xv. 4. 22. and xxi. 22. and 1 Cor. v. 4. I might point out to you, as to the defender of national churches, Boyd on the Ephesians, chap. iv. 11. p. 503. & 504. And Gillespie's Eng. Pop. Cerem. part 3. dig. 1. and 4. And I might also desire you to read and consider *Altare Damascenum, de episcopi potestate extensiva*, p. 206. 207. latest edition, *&c.* And thus I would not be behind with you, in taking the advantage of the concessions of those you pretend to follow, as you do throughout your review, with the concessions of the Independents. But it is a poor shift to take shelter under the authority of a friend or adversary, where scriptural defence fails, or to fill up the place of scripture-proof by any human authority.

When I was reading the Presbyterian writers, thirsting for proof of classical Presbytery; where I was expecting to find my doubts cleared by scripture-evidence, there I was remitted to authors and commentators, which, when consulted, said no more than had been already said; but it was their authority

thority that was urged to satisfy me; and therefore that was magnified. After such disappointments, I have securely heard the many mighty boastings that are to this day among your people, of the abundant confutation of the congregational principles by Presbyterian writers, and by those of the assembly at Westminster; as I now hear you boasting of the weight and solidity of their answers to their Independent brethren. But if there be any scriptural defence in these answers, serving to manifest the insufficiency of what is advanced by me, that I have not seen or heard of, you will oblige me extremely, by shewing it to me. Yet, as neither all the objections nor answers of the classical Presbyterians will be found calculated for the state of the controversy wherein you have been very briskly engaging yourself, so you have insinuated a suspicion, that I am not, even from these divines, to expect an answer to all that is by me advanced, when you except my distinguishing singularities. The divines of Westminster did their best to answer unto what was advanced against them. And it lies upon you to answer to the distinguishing and singular advances, which you say have been made by me. Though I would put you hard to it, if I required you to shew me the advance I have made, wherein I have not some renowned author or commentator with me; yet their authority can avail me nothing without scripture: And while I have the word of God, and the footsteps of the first flocks that followed Christ set before me there, I need not take ill with the old reproach of *singularity*. If you take that company from me, I shall own myself singular, though I had a million of your authors about me; but till you do this, which I am satisfied you have not, please forbear the old Jewish and Popish cant about singularity, and preferring my own notions of things before all men, both of piety and learning.

The second instance has also some confirmation in what you say of the consequences of the want of the due exercise of discipline among the Dissenters at this day; to verify, as I take it, what was alledged by these vile writers, Edwards and Bastwic, against the Independents. But as this new charge of yours against the present Dissenters, falls no less on the Presbyterian Dissenters than on those of other denominations, so I reckon your national church has no great ground to glory over the English Presbyterians in that matter. I cannot well understand you in what you say on this head; but, as I take it, it savours to me of the old cant of the Popish party, and

of

of the high church faction in England, and seems to import a better liking to the tenth age, as of all other the most free of sects and infidelity, and shining in a peaceful uniformity among the rest of the ages, as the moon among the stars. You are dissatisfied with the last age for want of uniformity, and because of sects; and you are no better pleased with this age on the same account; and as little could the age of the apostles yield you satisfaction in this matter: and where to find any age to your mind in this thing I cannot tell, unless it be the tenth.

I am far from taking it for granted by you, but I am certain you have not been yet able to prove, that the principles maintained by me are any otherwise chargeable with the effects you ascribe to them, than the gospel is to be charged with all the damnable heresies that sprung up with that good seed, when it was sown in the world; or than the true reformed doctrine and separation from the church of Rome is chargeable with all the errors, heresies, and sects, and all the atheism and infidelity that appears among them called *Protestants*; or then you will say, that all the sects of the last age flowed from the Presbyterians their razing down the Episcopal uniformity to set up their own, and that all the infidelity and heresy of this age flows from the principles of the revolution, yea from the revolution itself. I agree with you, that premisses from which absurd inferences are plainly deducible, are not truth. But I have neither such a conceit of your understanding nor of mine, as to imagine that we cannot draw inferences both plain and absurd to us from some truths of the gospel, which is wholly unto our depraved minds and hearts as the light is unto darkness. I shall tell you of an inference that is plain to me, and that I think I plainly deduce from all that I have had access to consider of the controversy betwixt uniformity and liberty of conscience in the matters of religion; and it is this, That while the world is the world, we must either suffer the horrible ignorance, spiritual slavery and superstition of the tenth century to take place in it, or the infidelity, heresy, and sects of this century, and of the last; and that in this case, the only way wherein a man can walk suitably to the rules of the gospel, and his duty therein required toward the powers of the earth, so as to keep himself unspotted from the world, and promote the eternal welfare of his own soul, and the souls of others, in a preparation for the world to come, is indeed the congregational way. And the spirit that shews itself in the various

ways of oppoſition to that, is to me plainly the ſame that ſhewed itſelf from the beginning againſt Chriſtianity, in the primitive profeſſion of it in the world.

The third inſtance, touching metaphyſics, you have abundantly confirmed in your Review, as will ſoon be evident to every one that reads what you ſay, p. 28. p. 46. at the beginning, and p. 72. at the end, p. 73. at the beginning. You deſire me to compare my own beloved diſtinction, *the body aſſembling*, and *the aſſembly of that body*, and what you have ſaid on 1 Cor xiv. and ſee which of us have moſt plied that art. That diſtinction I own I uſed; but that it is peculiar to me, or that I regard it farther than it plainly takes its riſe from the ſcripture, I am not ſatisfied. If you or any man can ſay, that the word *church* ſtands in the ſame ſenſe 1 Cor. xiv. 23. as it ſtands 1 Cor. xi. 18. and 1 Cor. xiv. 35. then I ſhall own that I have plied that art in my reaſoning as much as you; and that is enough. And the diſtinction is manifeſt to every perſon that can underſtand you when you ſay, A miniſter in the preſbytery of Meigle went to the preſbytery ſuch a day, and made a ſpeech in it to better purpoſe than he does elſewhere; but ſuch another day he was not in the preſbytery, being confined to his houſe by ſickneſs. If it require a metaphyſical head to underſtand ſuch diſcourſe as this is, then the moſt plain men in your pariſh muſt be barbarians to one another in their converſation. Does not your ſervant know there is but one preſbytery of Meigle? and yet, if he attend his maſter, he ſees twelve preſbyteries in that place ordinarily in the year. I muſt ſay, you have been at a great loſs for inſtances of metaphyſical turns on ſcripture in my letter, to be compared with the Preſbyterian metaphyſics, when this came to be the only inſtance you had to give.

The fourth inſtance is as well ſupported in your Review as any of the foregoing. It is true you call it *a charge*, and becauſe unfixed, that is, though it be in your own words, yet the page of your book is not cited; therefore it is a calumny, a falſe and unchriſtian charge: And by this I perceive it offends you not a little, that I take notice of the pride of your own wiſdom, and of your uncharitable conduct toward the Independents in this controverſy. If theſe words be not your's, let the charge be declared unfixed. "I "look upon it as too injurious an imputation on a church, "which was ſo long a time under the immediate direction "of the bleſſed apoſtles, to imagine they did not embrace "the times of peace, and fix themſelves into ſuch a compe-

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" tent number of congregations as was beſt ſuited to the edi-
" fication of that ſacred body, and came up as near as might
" then be, to that becoming order and regularity, which is
" the great ornament and beauty of Chriſtian ſociety?"
Again: " Can it well be imagined, without an impeachment
" of the apoſtles, who, for the moſt part, had their reſidence
" for many years at Jeruſalem, not only during the heats of
" perſecution, but during the times of peace and quiet, that
" all this while they would have left this church in irregular
" circumſtances, been at no pains to eſtabliſh her conſtitu-
" tion, and make up her orderly diſtinct meetings for public
" worſhip?" But if theſe be your words, and if ſuch like arguments be to be found in the Preſbyterian writers, by every one that reads them, I humbly judge it no calumny: or, if you judge it ſtill a calumny, then I expect you'll clear yourſelf of it in time coming, by refuſing that any thing is according to the mind of Chriſt in his word, for this reaſon, becauſe to your wiſdom it appears diſorderly and indecent; and by forbearing to affirm, that a government is of Chriſt's inſtitution, upon this ground, that to you it appears decent and orderly.

As to what I ſaid, of your putting on a bar of infallibility, and freely uſing all manner of reflections on the Independents, while you can bear no inſinuation of a reflection from them, and carrying as if you were the only men that had a right to judge for all others, making conjectures, and laying down ſuppoſitions without proof, and explaining ſcriptures by them, and requiring that your inferences ſhould be received for undoubted truth, while you ſuffer not others to open their lips without ſtrict demonſtrations. I ſee you have demonſtrated this in your Review: you give me a promiſe in the beginning, and you tell me in the end you have kept it. The promiſe is, " That you are not to render railing for
" railing, nor treat the perſons of any men with burleſque
" or ignominious names, as I have done." This promiſe contains a heavy charge on me, which I have not ſeen fixed. You pretend to ſupport it in theſe words. Have you not the moſt ludicrous and unbecoming invectives againſt us in your Obſervations, terming the whole church *Babylon*, and particular perſons *perverters*; nay, malicious perverters of the ſcripture, detainers of the truth in unrighteouſneſs, and the like? The firſt of theſe has its foundation in theſe words of mine,
" You are yet highly offended, that any in the place of the
" world where you live, ſhould come out of Babylon, and

" return to the congregations of the saints, there to cleave to " the truly uniting word of the apostles and prophets, in op- " position to that dividing and desolating mean of union that " was set up in the place of it." But this touches only a state of things, and declares, that I understand that scripture-word to comprehend in its meaning all that pertains to that falling away from the primitive church-order laid down by the apostles, and which we have now in the scriptures; of which the Apostle speaks 2 Thess ii. and so it indeed touches the state of the question betwixt you and me, *i. e.* Whether a national church, like that you contend for, be agreeable to the plan laid down by the apostles, or a thing quite of another kind, substituted in the place of it, and taking place by a deviation and falling away from it, and set up in opposition to it? You will not say, that the scripture is railing or treating the persons of men with burlesque or ignominious names, when it gives that name to any society to which you think it is applicable, and when it calls the Lord's people to come out of that society. And would not the men of that society, who declare it the most decent and orderly, and agreeable to the will of God, and where the Lord's people have been for many ages, *&c.* pronounce you a foul-mouth'd heretic and schismatic, and a railer, in applying that name to that society? And whatever that society be, you will find the zealous contenders for it profess as great certainty about their constitution as you do about yours, and can profess no less zeal in opposition to what they call libertinism and uncertainty as you can do.

But, after all, you are certainly in the right in separating from them, and that society is to you Babylon. Very well, follow your judgment. Yet you must own you have as little right to dictate to others the sense of the word *Babylon*, as they have to dictate to you. Next you say, I call particular persons malicious perverters of the scripture; and this seems to me to arise from these words of mine, touching your application of 2 Tim. iii. to them that separate from your parish-communion. " While you thus maliciously pervert the " holy word of God, to shew that men ought to turn away " from the objects of your hatred." From that passage in the observations, the perversion of that text will be manifest to the reader, when he considers it, and when he reads your application of it in your words by me quoted. If he can say, that it was made in the observation of that word of God, 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2.; yea, if your own conscience can say it, then let it stand for

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an inſtance of my railing. But if it be otherwiſe, as Calvin's name and ſenſe of the text will not clear you of guilt, ſo it was meet you ſhould have treated the admonition I gave you, and the admoniſher, otherwiſe than to turn again and rend him. Next you ſay, I call particular perſons detainers of the truth in unrighteouſneſs; and, ſo far as I can know, the foundation of this charge is in theſe words of mine, "If you "receive any conviction from what I have ſaid, do not ſtifle "your convictions, do not reſiſt the truth, nor detain it in "unrighteouſneſs." Now, theſe are the particular inſtances you gave of my railing and unbecoming invectives, for which, you promiſe, you ſhall not render railing. But that the reader may ſee the confirmation of my fourth inſtance in the firſt obſervation, and how you have kept this promiſe, I ſhall point out ſome inſtances in your Review.

Your promiſe ſtands p. 7.; and in that ſame page you ſay, with reference to a ſentence of mine, which you call "a "charge, and falſe general charges, without condeſcending "on particulars, in their ſeveral circumſtances, are calum- "nious, and croſs to the very ſpirit of the goſpel." As I greatly queſtion the truth of this, becauſe it would lead me to quarrel ſeveral inſtances in the goſpel, ſo I find you ſay this in deep forgetfulneſs of your own charge againſt me in your promiſe, and of your promiſe itſelf. At leaſt, it ſatisfies me of the truth of what I have ſaid upon the fourth inſtance, whereof I am ſtill more and more ſatisfied by what follows.

Page 8. you ſay "I make light of Solomon's judgment, "and take care to prefer my own notions of things before all "men both of piety and learning."

Page 9. Beſide other hard words, you ſay, "That while I "charge the Preſbyterians with altering their ſpirit in the diſ- "pute with us, I myſelf outdo all the Preſbyterian writers "you ever read or ſaw on this ſubject."

Page 10. Your words are, "As for your ludicrous treat- "ment, I deſpiſe it, it being the common burden of all your "performances."

Page 11. "Fix the charge, leſt every one who reads "them call them a calumny, and ſo juſtly reckon, that, while "you are recommending a Chriſtian temper, you can at the "ſame time make falſe and unchriſtian charges." Again, "When he has given us ſuch examples, precepts, and "rules in the word, as are evident to every one who reads "it, one may juſtly ſay, that he (to wit, the Independ- "ent)

" ent) who refuſes the plain and immediate conſequen-
" ces drawn from theſe, (as Mr Aytone's conſequences
" are to him), acts injuriouſly to Chriſt and his apoſtles."
Again, " Firſt give the heavy ſtroke, and then raiſe the loud
" cry."

Page 12. " Can you refuſe, without a bluſh, that you have
" made poſitive charges in your anſwer to the defence of na-
" tional churches, even when you have given no better argu-
" ment than your own aſſertion? Have you brought no
" unchriſtian charges againſt us in the explication of your
" propoſition? In a word, as we diſclaim Popiſh infallibi-
" lity, ſo we hold a poſitive certainty of our principles, in
" oppoſition to libertiniſm and uncertainty. Thus I have
" gone through your firſt general libel, which has all the
" characteriſtics of a calumny."

Page 14. " However you may be angry with a church's
" determining circumſtances of time and place, have you ſet
" down the different pages whereon this inconſiſtency is found-
" ed? No; that would have at once ſpoiled all." Page 36.
" Nay, in what page of my book is this fancy laid down? This
" was not conſiſtent with the nature of your Obſervations to
" tell us." Page 58. " You have concealed the page where
" they are to be found, for ends beſt known to yourſelf."
Page 59. " Theſe, I own, are my words; but have you told
" in what page? No; this would have marred all; they are
" p. 85. Now, if you had deſigned common juſtice in your
" obſervations, you would have directed your reader to
" page, *&c.*" Page 89. " I leave it to others, who ſhall
" read your conduct in this miſſive, to judge, if the methods
" purſued by you have the appearance of one who wrote for
" the ſake of truth, and as a debt he owed to it. Candour
" in laying an adverſary's mind and words before the world,
" and citing the places where they may be found, is ſome-
" what agreeable to ſuch a pretence; but how much of this,
" and that of a fair anſwerer, is to be found in your per-
" formance, I leave every reader to judge. I remember I
" have heard it always as a complaint on the church of
" Rome," *&c.* Page 15. " I have got rid of this inconſiſt-
" ency, and I wiſh it may not riſe again on me in ano-
" ther ſhape. Alas! you have turned it into another fi-
" gure.—But have you ſet down the pages where this formi-
" dable inconſiſtency is founded?"

Page 16. " Candour with ſolemn pretenſions is very ſuit-
" able,

" able. You next fright me with a fresh inconsistency. You " conceal the pages."

Page 17. " You have taken the freedom to misrepresent " me; and, lest the fraud should appear to every ordinary " reader, you have concealed the pages. I am no sooner " free of one inconsistency than I am charged with another, " with equal honesty and fairness."

Page 18. " And a greater perversion of words is not con- " ceivable than what is here. Whether your conduct be " consistent with common justice."

Page 19. " I wish I may get rid of it, for it is very formi- " dable."

Page 20. " How consistent your conduct is with the so- " lemnity of your pretensions in the conclusion."

Page 26. " You seem to let light of the context." Page 34. " The context which you are pleased sometimes to let light " of, as p. 17." Page 79. " But this is of a piece with " your disregarding contexts, as before, p. 17."

Page 30. " Such a way of doing is mean, and unbeco- " ming a man, to misrepresent and trifle."

Page 31. " You charge the Presbyterians with positive as- " sertions. But justly might I recriminate in every page al- " most, when all I meet with is nothing else but such."

Page 32. " Have you marked down the pages of my book? " No; this would have given the reader easy access to see " your trifling."

Page 49. " It would have been fair in you to have related " my mind fully. It would have been fair in you as an an- " swerer."

Page 52. " Such mean shifts as these you have recourse to " will never be of any good issue."

Page 54. " You have trifled instead of answering."

Page 61. " These are your words; but how conscientious- " ly they are jumbled together as expressive of my mind."

Page 63. " But these are methods unbecoming the sobriety " of a Christian."

Page 72. " By this we have a swatch of your candour, a- " mong other instances."

Page 75. " And leave your bold assertions in the conclu- " sion, to have what weight they will with your admirers; " for I am of the mind they will have little weight with such " as are capable to judge for themselves. Your dexterity in " this point consists in misrepresentations, concealments, and

" such

" ſuch practices. I find nothing but poor ſhifts and carp-
" ings."

Page 76. " In the exceſs of your modeſty."

Page 77. " A pitiful juggle."

Page 79. " Sir, if I were at an end of this miſſive, I hope
" never to engage with one that has caſt off reaſon, as a mean
" of judging concerning things ſacred."

Page 80. " Your impertinent queſtions and wranglings in-
" ſtead of anſwers —— Signs of a deſperate cauſe; your ca-
" vils and quibbles on Matth. xviii. I am obliged to you
" for your fatherly concern; but ſhall be glad I have never
" greater need of compaſſion."

Page 81. " I am wearied with ſuch trifling and ſtories, in-
" ſtead of anſwers."

Page 84. " You have a dexterity in raiſing imaginary in-
" conſiſtencies; and I expect you will ſhew an equal ſkill in
" reconciling a real one."

Page 87. " I am wearied with ſuch trifling, and am reſolved
" to be no more with it; ſo you may write, and impoſe on
" the credulous as much as you have a mind; but the event
" of theſe things is dangerous."

Page 89. " Sir, I have finiſhed my anſwer; and I hope,
" in an agreeableneſs to my promiſe in the entry; and muſt
" now tell you, that more notorious miſrepreſentations, baſe
" calumnies, and uncharitable cenſures, were never caſt up-
" on any ſociety of men."

OBSERVATION II.

I proceed now to the ſecond obſervation, wherein you find yourſelf charged with inconſiſtencies in managing a diſpute againſt the Epiſcopalians and Independents in one and the ſame book; for, under your correction, I offered ſome inſtances that ſerved to confirm me in my opinion, that it is not meet to engage in ſuch a diſpute.

Of the firſt inſtance you endeavour to clear yourſelf by ſignifying, " That a court meeting in the name of Chriſt,
" and acting in his authority, is merely circumſtantial, and
" a matter left by Chriſt to be managed according to his ge-
" neral rules of decency and order; but an officer acting in
" his name is a thing eſſential, and ſo different from what is
" purely circumſtantial, as that of more or fewer courts in
" any church is." But what is the difference? and how

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comes the one to be eſſential, and the other purely circumſtantial? And why may not the ſame apology be made for the Epiſcopal ſubordination of officers, not expreſsly inſtituted, that you made in your book for the Preſbyterian ſubordination of ruling courts not expreſsly inſtituted? You tell me, "It is "falſe; that there is neither apoſtolical example nor precept "for the ſubordination of judicatures." And the Epiſcopalian can tell you, with no leſs ſcripture evidence, that it is falſe; that there is neither apoſtolical example or precept for the ſubordination of officers; and, if you will take their ſuppoſitions, whereby they explain ſcriptures, and draw conſequences from them, as you would have me to grant your ſuppoſitions, and admit your conſequences, they will give you two ſcriptures for one. But I was ſpeaking of theſe three courts, kirk-ſeſſions, provincial ſynods, and national ſynods, for which you cannot pretend apoſtolical example or precept.

Next you tell me, "If the proportion of my parallel have "any thing in it, it is this, *viz.* Becauſe Solomon hath ſaid, "*In the multitude of counſellors there is ſafety*; therefore "it is equally ſafe to deſcend from the counſel of a great "multitude, and devolve all into one perſon." But did not Solomon himſelf obſerve his own proverb, without being on a level with his counſellors? Had not the primitive one biſhop his preſbytery, with which he conſulted, as Cyprian informs us? Had not the Scots biſhop his preſbytery? Are there not councils of biſhops? And does not the Pope conſult with his cardinals, and other divines, and therein pretend to regard Solomon's ſaying as much as your ſynods, where one or two, perhaps the moſt ignorant in the aſſembly, can caſt the balance in a diviſion when it comes to the vote, and decide the moſt intricate and important queſtion that comes before them? I find Pope Clement XI. ſpeaking thus in the bull *Unigenitus*, "We therefore, by the favour of God, and "depending on his heavenly aid, carefully and diligently, as "the greatneſs of the affair required, ſet about ſo ſalutary a "work; and ordered very many propoſitions, faithfully ex"tracted out of the foreſaid book, according to the above"rehearſed editions reſpectively, and expreſſed both in the "French and Latin languages, by ſeveral maſters in ſacred "theology, to be accurately diſcuſſed and ſifted before two "of our venerable cardinal brothers of the holy Roman "church, and then before us: having alſo taken the advice "of ſeveral other cardinals in council, to be, with the great"eſt diligence poſſible, and maturity, pondered and exami-

" ned in congregations held at ſeveral times.—Wherefore, " after we had heard the ſuffrages of the foreſaid cardinals, " and other divines, exhibited to us, both by word of mouth, " and likewiſe by writing; and eſpecially having implored " the aſſiſtance of divine light, not only by private, but alſo " public prayers, ſolemnly appointed for that end, we do, " by this our conſtitution, to continue in perpetual force, " declare, condemn, and, with the utmoſt abhorrence, re- " ject all and every one of the propoſitions before inſerted " reſpectively," *&c.* So that unleſs you can affirm, that this ſaying of Solomon, this part of ſacred writ, contains an inſtitution for Preſbyterian ſynods, in oppoſition both to Epiſcopal church-government, and the government which is by the counſel and agreement of a company of elders or biſhops in every church, with the conſent of that church where they are elders, and where they ſtand in immediate ſubjection to and dependence on Jeſus Chriſt, that can by no means extricate you from your difficulty. And if you do not confine that word to the New Teſtament, you muſt own, that, in Solomon's days, there was a ſubordination of officers as well as of courts. Now the Epiſcopalian will tell you, that if this ſaying did not deſtroy the ſubordination of officers in Solomon's time, why may not the ſubordination of courts and officers hold together now alſo, without any prejudice to Solomon's ſaying?

You next give me a diſtinction betwixt an habitual and actual ſociety, *i. e.* as I take it, betwixt the ſynod of Angus having power to meet and act in Chriſt's name, and that ſynod exerciſing that power, as betwixt the Biſhop of Brichen having power to exerciſe the Epiſcopal office, and that Biſhop actually exerciſing it. And then you reprove me for being angry with a church's determining circumſtances as time and place; for no other reaſon, that I know, but becauſe I am as little for a court-meeting, and ruling over the churches of Chriſt in his name without his expreſs inſtitution, as I am for an officer's ruling over his officers without his expreſs inſtitution. And thus you clear yourſelf as to the firſt inſtance.

As to the ſecond inſtance; you firſt betake yourſelf to that ſhift which you are pleaſed to uſe throughout your letter, *viz.* " The pages are not ſet down." But do you ſhow, that I miſrepreſented you? And when you have now explained yourſelf in other words, I am not ſenſible of the conſiſtency of your advance againſt me, and againſt the Epiſcopalians.

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The manner wherein you now expreſs your advance againſt me is, "I gave it as my opinion, that, according to what I could "learn from the hiſtory of the New Teſtament, I was not "able to determine myſelf of any one church that was no "more but congregational, or that continued ſo." And you now expreſs what you advanced againſt the Epiſcopalians, in this manner. "But in after ages I perceived from human "teſtimony, that the moſt of the churches mentioned by "them were ſuch, and in ſmall villages." I hope you are to keep now by theſe words, and not give me new ones in their ſtead the next time, becauſe I have not ſet down the page. Now, you muſt either deny the truth of what you have ſaid upon human teſtimony, and ſo give up what you pleaded upon it to the Epiſcopalians, and own to him, that the church where the one biſhop is found in the ſecond and third centuries, conſiſted of ſeveral diſtinct congregations; or you muſt acknowledge, that the moſt of the churches, mentioned by writers in the ages after the New-Teſtament ſcripture was finiſhed, were congregational in your judgment, and that they were ſuch in ſmall villages; ſuch then, according to you, were the churches where that innovation, one biſhop, took place after the apoſtles, and theſe were the apoſtolic churches, and of the ſame kind with them; or elſe you ſay nothing againſt the Epiſcopalian: for if they differed from the apoſtolic churches in this, that they were congregational, he has no concern about them. It is enough to him, that he finds the one biſhop in the churches of the apoſtolic kind, conſiſting of many different congregations: you muſt therefore either reconcile yourſelf by ſaying, that the fathers, after the apoſtles departed from their plan, by erecting a multitude of congregational churches; or that the churches erected by the apoſtles, did in after ages dwindle into ſingle congregations; or you muſt ſay, that though you remained doubtful in reading the New Teſtament, whether the apoſtles erected congregational churches; yet, by reading the fathers that lived neareſt them, you came to perceive, that they did erect churches. If this be your meaning, I am able to perceive, that you ſpeak againſt the Epiſcopalian; but it is in a conceſſion to me; ſo that you cannot ſpeak ſtrong and full in this caſe againſt us both; and this is what I was telling you. But leſt I ſhould take advantage of the conceſſion, you inquire, "Have I any where ſaid, that theſe churches were inde-"pendent?" To which I anſwer, Neither did I any where ſay, that the churches in the ages after the apoſtles were alto-

gether independent of councils, after the innovation of one biſhop in every church, which paved the way for ſynods and councils, that took place as the native conſequence of that innovation. But how comes the affair of councils upon the field, to clear you of an inconſiſtency in your way of ſpeaking about the ſize of the particular churches erected by the apoſtles?

You next endeavour to clear yourſelf of an inconſiſtency as to what you ſaid of the-greater churches, by giving it another turn: For you had ſaid before, "And it is not to be "doubted, that though the number of profeſſors of Chriſti-"anity in any large city, and the catechumens, might be ſo "great, as they could not aſſemble in one place for the or-"dinary participation of ordinances; yet thoſe who were ad-"mitted to partake of the euchariſt, might have place to aſ-"ſemble in one body, or thoſe who could not have acceſs "at firſt, might have afterwards occaſion, by the removal "of others, to communicate in the ſame church or place; as "is the caſe of many cities even at this day." And every body ſees, that this ſerved to ſhew, that the biſhop's dioceſe, in the ſecond and third centuries, was no larger, even in the greater cities, than one of our city-pariſhes, that comes together to receive the Lord's ſupper in one place, and at one table. But now you ſay, "Though I ſhewed what were "the methods uſed to raiſe the Epiſcopal power in large ci-"ties, where there were more congregations than one, when "the altar was erected in the biſhop's church, and ſo one "prieſt and one altar, and *one church* and *one altar* came to "be current terms; yet I never ſo much as inſinuated, that "this practice, or theſe terms, were according to the New "Teſtament." And then you ſay, "Thus I have got rid "of this inconſiſtency." But let me tell you, thus a man can rid himſelf of any inconſiſtency, by ſaying another thing that to him appears not ſo inconſiſtent. And I am not yet ſenſible, that you was, in your book and words before ſet down, or the place where they are, ſhewing, that this was a method uſed to raiſe the Epiſcopal power, even the turning of his dioceſe, that at firſt conſiſted of many communicating congregations, into one communicating congregation, coming together in one place, to partake of the ſupper, as does one of your city-pariſhes. But if you alledge, as you ſeem to do, "That this was a method uſed to raiſe the "Epiſcopal power;" then you ſay againſt the Epiſcopalian, that if the one biſhop had remained dioceſan, as at the beginning,

ginning, and had not become congregational, as he did in the ſecond and third centuries, his power had been leſs.

Thus you cannot get rid of this inconſiſtency, unleſs you either own to the Epiſcopalian, that dioceſan Epiſcopacy was in being in the very firſt ages after the apoſtles, or acknowledge to the Independent, that the churches in theſe ages were only congregations, the greateſt of them coming together in one place to eat the Lord's ſupper; and if theſe were the churches where the innovation of one biſhop took place, theſe were the apoſtolic churches. You hear of the one altar as ſoon as you hear of the one biſhop, and that is from Ignatius, who was biſhop of no leſs a church than that in Antioch; and he writes of it to the church of the Epheſians, and to the church of the Philadelphians. You do not deny, that the term *one church* and *one altar*, was borrowed from the Old Teſtament; but you'll find one altar in the New-Teſtament-church, even Jeſus Chriſt, both altar and ſacrifice, whereof the whole true Iſrael, the myſtical body partakes, Heb. xiii. 10.—15. And though the fathers miſtook, in the application of the word *altar*, and this miſtake occaſioned ſuperſtition, and at length idolatry; yet they had a foundation in the New Teſtament, for the uſe of the word *altar*, with reſpect to a congregation of the ſaints, coming together in one place to partake of the ſupper: for in their communion in that bread and cup there is a repreſentation of the communion of the true Iſrael, in their one altar Jeſus Chriſt; and this is the antitype of the typical Iſrael, their communion in the typical altar, 1 Cor. x. 15.—18. Thus far the fathers ſpake according to the New Teſtament, as well as the Old, in ſpeaking of one church and one altar. And whatever you ſay of the raiſing of the Epiſcopal power; yet if they had held by their firſt notion of one church and one altar, there had never been a dioceſan biſhop in the world; but the forſaking of that, and keeping by the notion of one biſhop and one church, was the true cauſe of all the miſchief that followed. For out of this came one catholic viſible church, with one biſhop or one council, with as many altars as pariſhes; a monſter of a church, the like unto which there is nothing either in the old Teſtament or in the New, or among the firſt fathers; though that myſtery of iniquity was then working, firſt in the affair of one biſhop in one church, and then in the buſineſs of ſynods and councils, that, in their very firſt appearance, divided the churches, (as in the deciſions

decisions about Easter), but served to join together that horrible catholic visible body, "The man of sin."

The third, you say, is the second turned into another shape, and complain that I have not set down the pages; while yet you own I have set down pages for the one branch, which is the only branch whereon you charge me with falsehood. And as for the other branch, for which the page is not set down, you yourself own it, and direct us to one of the pages where it is found. What is the ground then of the loud cry about noting down your pages here, when you note down the page, and give your words, to ease the reader? You should have set down the whole sentence, which is as follows. "If "our author is not acting the Jesuit, he must understand "by congregation such a competent number of Christians, as "can assemble for ordinary in one place, for public worship, "and may be edified by the preaching of one pastor at a "time." And this is the first branch.

The other stands in these words in my Observations, p. 10. "But against the Episcopalians you would set it on another "footing, and have recourse to the Lord's supper, and the "whole body partaking of one altar, as it is called, distinct "from the catechumens, p. 534. 535. So, against the In-"dependents, you make Perth and Dundee, and the like, "to be two congregations, and against the Episcopalians, "you make them but one." I have a little before cited the words of pages 534. 535. where you signify, that, setting aside the catechumens, they that partook of the eucharist in larger cities, might assemble in one body, or as they do in many cities at this day.

Now, Sir, that I may not seem to be playing the Jesuit with this word *congregation*, and that there may be nothing but candour betwixt us, let us bring it to these cities at this day, Dundee and Perth, in each of which there are two assemblies ordinarily hearing sermon, and yet but one assembly for breaking of bread; and therefore there is but one parish of Dundee, and one parish of Perth; whereas in Edinburgh and Glasgow, where there are several assemblies for the Lord's supper, there are several parishes. Though there should be many other kinds of congregations in a city; yet if there be but one body of Christians there, assembling from time to time in one place to eat the Lord's supper, there is only one such congregation there as I call a *Christian church*; and in such a congregation all the ordinances of church-worship, and the Christian discipline ought to be performed. But in

your

your way of ſtating the controverſy with the Independents, you would make two ſuch congregations as are churches both in Dundee and Perth; while it is manifeſt, from your words before cited, p. 534. 535. of your book, that againſt the Epiſcopalians you make but one ſuch congregation as is a church in Dundee, and one in Perth; yet now you would bring yourſelf off by telling me, "That in theſe pages you "hold, that in large and populous cities there were ſeveral "congregations." Yes, you ſaid ſo; but in theſe you included the catechumens, while you did not doubt but they who were admitted to partake of the euchariſt might aſſemble in one place. And you ſay further, for clearing yourſelf, "Though the guiſe of theſe times brought it in cuſtom, for "gaining their end, to have all of them communicate at the "biſhop's church; yet it never entered into my head they "were all one ſingle congregation on that account; nor have "I given the leaſt inſinuation of it." You do indeed ſpeak of a practice at Rome, that had its riſe about the year 312, of ſending part of the elements from the biſhop's church to other congregations in the city; but before that time, you ſeem to contend, that the communicating church in a place was but a ſingle congregation. Your words are: "It is true "Juſtin Martyr ſays, that after the preſident of the aſſembly "hath conſecrate the bread and wine, the deacons ſtand "ready to diſtribute it to every one preſent, and carry it to "thoſe who are abſent; yet it doth not appear, that it was "to any aſſembly of Chriſtians, but rather to ſingle perſons "of the ſame congregation, who had not acceſs to be preſent: for he ſeems plainly to ſpeak of the preſident of one "ſingle congregation, and what was the general practice in "his time."

You clear yourſelf in the ſame manner of the fourth inſtance: for you firſt tell me, I conceal the pages, and charge me with fraud in ſo doing, and this without ſhewing that I have miſrepreſented you. I had ſaid, "Againſt the Inde"pendents you gather together all thoſe converted by the "miniſtry of the apoſtles in Jeruſalem, and all thoſe con"verted by Paul's miniſtry in Epheſus, where he continued "by the ſpace of two years; ſo that all they which dwelt "in Aſia heard the word of the Lord Jeſus: and this to make "the number of Chriſtians both in Jeruſalem and Epheſus "to be ſo great, that there behoved to be many congrega"tions in each of them." Needed I quote pages for this? Is not the number of them converted by the preaching of the

goſpel

goſpel in Jeruſalem and Epheſus, the grand branch of your argument proving a plurality of congregations in Jeruſalem and in Epheſus? Where then is the fraud in concealing pages? But leſt you ſtill complain of fraud, are not theſe your words touching the church of Epheſus? "We ſhall obſerve "the former method, 1. To ſhew, that there were more "congregations in her than one: 2. That all theſe were under "the government of a college or preſbytery, and not a ſingle "perſon or biſhop. As to the firſt, The multiplicity of con- "verts that were at Epheſus, and their great number will "make it evident, that there were in that church ſeveral "congregations or aſſemblies for public worſhip. And for "clearing this, it is obſervable, that the Apoſtle Paul conti- "nued at Epheſus more than the ſpace of two years, *&c.* "Beſides, during the time of his continuance there, it is "remarked by the inſpired hiſtorian, *That all that dwelt in "Aſia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks*; "and this they had the readier acceſs unto, in that the tem- "ple of Diana being there, the city of Epheſus was the pu- "blic place of their worſhip, which occaſioned their fre- "quent reſorting thither."

If theſe be your words, I hope you will not deny, that this is among the firſt things you ſay in the proof of a church in the city of Epheſus, conſiſting of many congregations. After ſeveral flouriſhes upon the multiplicity of converts at Epheſus, including all them on whom fear fell, your words are, "And it is worth notice, that infinite wiſdom directed "the apoſtles to make their longeſt ſtays in remarkable ci- "ties, and to make the offer of the goſpel in thoſe places "where was the greateſt reſort of people, ſuch as Jeruſalem "and Samaria in the land of Judea, Antioch in Syria, Co- "rinth in Grecia, Rome in Italy, and Epheſus in the Leſſer "Aſia. But it muſt be moſt ſurpriſing, if in all of theſe the ſuc- "ceſs of the apoſtles labours muſt ſtill be circumſcribed within "the bounds of one aſſembly, or congregation of Chri- "ſtians." By this time the reader will be ſenſible, how little ground there is for the charge of fraud in concealing the pages, and perverting the ſenſe, upon this branch of the inconſiſtency; and how little reaſon you had to complain of my taking the "freedom to miſrepreſent you, as if you had al- "ledged, that all theſe converted in Judea and Aſia had been "members of the churches of Jeruſalem and Epheſus." As to the other branch; it happened, that I had ſet down the page and your expreſs words; ſo you had no evaſion that way.

way. You set down over again some of your words cited by me, and own them to be yours, thus: "But what is the a-"mount of all this? Alas, he is inconsistent with himself; "for I hold," say you, p. 425. "that the *church*, in the "singular number, so far as I can observe, is no where in "the New Testament made use of in express terms, to de-"note any more than the *Christians in some city*, except "when the *Catholic church* is meant. These, I own, are "my words, and I shall hold the same opinion." You might also have owned the rest of them, which are to be seen in the Observations, p. 11. But how you get rid of the inconsistency betwixt what is now owned, and what is said above, I see not; If it be not by the addition you now make to the word *city*: for you now say, "That city, or its vici-"nities, and that city, or its neighbourhood." If you include not all Judea in the vicinities of Jerusalem, and all the proconsular Asia in the neighbourhood of Ephesus, and so give up to the Episcopalians what you was just now taking from them, you must mean something like the suburbs; and so this addition of *vicinities* and *neighbourhood*, whereby you correct your former assertion, serves to enlarge the churches of Jerusalem and Ephesus, but not to extricate you. After inquiring at me, Where is the inconsistency? you tell me on the one hand, "I hold, that the church of Ephesus imports only "the *Christians* in that city or its neighbourhood; and yet "it must be taken distributively for several congregations "therein." But you should also have told, that this was one great reason why it should be so taken, *viz.* That the success of the gospel preached in Ephesus, extended throughout all Asia. Then, on the other hand, you tell me, "I "hold against Dr Hammond, that the church of Ephesus "cannot be taken distributively for all the churches of Asia. "Now the whole secret is out." And I also say, now the whole secret is out. The telling of a part has brought out the whole.

On the fifth instance you make a very loud cry against me; but you as little clear yourself as on any of the foregoing. You had inferred, from what I said upon Acts xv. in the Explication of the proposition, how justly I shall not now stay to declare, "He plainly grants this synod had a dogmatical "power, but not that of jurisdiction and censure." Against this you endeavour to prove, that the one could not be without the other; because "a power and authority to deter-"mine ministerially in matters of doctrine is ecclesiastical,

" and belongs unto a church ; and as these churches had a " power dogmatically to judge of false doctrines, so there " was a jurisdictional power connected with it;" and you conclude your proof of the necessary connection betwixt these two powers thus : " This must be a truth in itself evident, " unless we shall suppose a court vested with a power to give " forth laws and regulations, and yet not impowered to cen- " sure the contraveners thereof, which seems to imply a " contradiction." p. 325. 326. 327. Against this I alledged, you allowed the power of the key of doctrine, which I took to be the same thing with your dogmatical power, to a single pastor; whom yet you would not suffer, by himself, to exercise the power of jurisdiction and censure, or to exercise the key of discipline, which I took to be the same thing with your power of jurisdiction and censure

But now your come off by a twofold distinction, 1. Between a doctrinal power and a dogmatical power. And you say you took care to distinguish thus before. I did indeed observe a distinction between a doctrinal power and a power of jurisdiction ; but, till now, I saw you not distinguish these three, the doctrinal power, the dogmatical power, and the power of jurisdiction and censure, which you say is connected with the dogmatical. And I can say nothing of your distinction till you inform me of the nature of your dogmatical power, as it is distinguished from your jurisdictional power, which you say is connected with it, and from your doctrinal power. 2. You distinguish between power as exercising in the preaching of the word to any competent number of Christians, and as exercised in a court of Christ, *i. e.* as I take it, between a person exercising power, and a court exercising power. And if this be it, then I may learn, that our doctrinal power is the power that a single minister exercises when he declares the laws of Christ; and the dogmatical power is the power that two or three of them in a session, or twenty of them in a presbytery, exercise when they declare the same thing together that they declared before separately in their pulpits ; and so it is their meeting together that makes the power to change from doctrinal into dogmatical. Well; but if two or three ministers should meet in a session, and declare some laws of Jesus Christ, and send them in an epistle to all the ministers and parishes in Scotland or in Britain, inform me, would this be the dogmatical power? Because I have a suspicion it would remain still doctrinal only. And if this be so, then I am taught, that the dogmatical power is the power that

that cannot be without the power of juriſdiction and cenſure; and therefore, whatever more I may come to have to ſay about this dogmatical power, this one thing is to be ſaid about it, that is inſeparably connected with the power of juriſdiction and cenſure. And ſo you ſtand clear of the fifth inconſiſtency, when the whole intrigue is come out.

The ſixth inſtance you are pleaſed to ſet down in your own words; and you ſay, "I wiſh I may get rid of it, for it is "very formidable; for ſay you, I have maintained againſt "the Independents the ſubordination of the ſynagogues unto "ſuperior courts, and made much uſe of the Jewiſh church "as the ſame thing eſſentially with the Chriſtian. Againſt "the Epiſcopalians I affirm, the Chriſtian church was not "founded till the reſurrection of Chriſt." And then you make your uſual complaint about the pages, and that theſe are not the words in your book. But I would be content to ſee wherein I have miſtaken or miſrepreſented you. Need I ſet down all the words of the firſt, ſecond, and third pages, of the very firſt ſection of the firſt chapter of your book, to ſhow, that you affirm the ſame thing more ſtrongly than in the words by me uſed, and bring arguments to prove it? Do you not conclude your reaſoning thus? "And in this I "am ſeconded by Mr Sage, that great champion for Epiſco-"pacy, who ſays, That the Chriſtian church was not, could "not be founded till our Lord was riſen, ſeeing it was to be "founded on his reſurrection." And when you have laid down this principle, with the conſent of your adverſary, do you not draw theſe two inferences from it againſt the Epiſcopalian? "1. That there is no argument can be drawn for Epiſcopal "government, from the actings of the twelve apoſtles and "ſeventy diſciples during the days of our Lord's perſonal mi-"niſtry, and while their meſſage was only, *The kingdom of* "*heaven is at hand.*—2. That the government of the Jewiſh "church, according to the ſubordination of their prieſts, "can be no argument for the like under the New Teſta-"ment." And, in the end of the ſection, you ſay theſe words: "And if there be any order or ſet of officers that "were under the Jewiſh diſpenſation, to which the miniſters "of the goſpel have a relation, or anſwer to, it muſt be to "the ordinary prophets and teachers in the ſynagogues, who "read and expounded the law and the prophets unto the "people, but had no concern in the temple."

But, after you have complained of my injuſtice, you now tell me what you really hold; for you ſay, "I hold," p. 1.

" that properly the Chriſtian church was founded on the re-
" ſurrection of Chriſt, and had not a formal being, diſtinct
" from the Jewiſh, till that time; yet the goſpel-church had
" its beginnings in the miniſtry of John the Baptiſt, and was
" gradually carried on by Chriſt and his apoſtles, till its for-
" mal eſtabliſhment diſtinct from the Jewiſh polity." By this newly added clauſe, about its beginnings in the miniſtry of John the Baptiſt, it ſeems to you it had not any beginnings before; and you have afforded ſome beginnings of a revival to the argument, from the actings of the twelve and the ſeventy, while their meſſage was, " The kingdom of heaven is
" at hand," which before you deſtroyed; for now you ſay,
" While that kingdom was only at hand, it even then had its
" beginnings, and was carried on gradually by Chriſt and his
" apoſtles." And how it was carried on before it was founded, and how it had its beginnings before it had a formal being, you can declare when you write again, by adding another clauſe, or by a metaphyſical diſtinction or two, ſhewing, that the oppoſition is not *ad idem, ſecundum idem, eodem modo, et eodem tempore*; and ſo no contradiction.

You ſay further, " Again, I hold, that the covenant of
" grace under the Old Teſtament and that under the New
" were ſubſtantially the ſame," p. 120. But I can ſee nothing like that in all that page of your book, unleſs it be in this ſentence. " None will deny the connection betwixt the
" manner of admiſſion under the Old Teſtament to that of
" the New or goſpel ſtate of the church, in *the fulneſs of*
" *time*, that acknowledge, with all orthodox divines, that
" the conſtitution of thoſe two churches were eſſentially the
" ſame, and that their only difference was in accidentals."
Becauſe it belongs to your reaſon to determine what was eſſential to the Old-Teſtament church, you are of opinion, that the whole temple-ſervice and prieſthood, and ſubordination among the prieſts, was accidental to the Old-Teſtament church of Iſrael; and that the peculiar regulations in the New-Teſtament church, agreeable to the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, vaſtly differing from that church-œconomy which hitherto had obtained by divine appointment, are but accidental to the New-Teſtament church: but the manner of admitting members was eſſential to the Old Teſtament church, and ſo muſt be alſo in the New Teſtament church, which is the ſame eſſentially. According to this, your only way with the Epiſcopalian was to tell him, " That the government of
" the Jewiſh church, according to the ſubordination that

" was

" was among the prieſts, was not eſſential, but accidental to " the Jewiſh church; and therefore can be no argument for " the like under the New Teſtament;" and not to draw this as an inference from your grand poſition, " The Chri- " ſtian church was not founded till Chriſt's reſurrection:" for, by this manner of overthrowing the Epiſcopal arguments from the Jewiſh church, you expoſe yourſelf to the Independent, and give him leave to tell you, that your arguments from the ſtate of the church before Chriſt's reſurrection will not prove the like under the New Teſtament; for the New-Teſtament church was not founded till Chriſt's reſurrection.

You proceed, and ſay farther, " That there was good rea- " ſon to infer a ſubordination of judicatures under the New " Teſtament from the ſubordination of the ſynagogues to " the eccleſiaſtical ſanhedrim under the Old; and that this " argument was founded, not on the identity of the thing, " but on a parity of reaſon," p. 283. *&c.* " Now, ſhew " me the inconſiſtency of theſe propoſitions?" But the Epiſcopalian can tell you, his argument for the ſubordination of officers from the Jewiſh ſubordination is not founded on the identity of the thing, but on a parity of reaſon. He does not plead for a typical prieſthood, but for good order among church-officers under the New Teſtament, as no leſs needful than under the Old; and he has this advantage of you, that, in theſe places which you cite for the ſubordination of ſynagogues to the ſanhedrim, there is not one word of a ſynagogue, nor of the rulers of ſynagogues in ſeparate or claſſical meetings, p. 281. 282.; but expreſs mention of the ſubordination of the church-officers, Levites, prieſts, and chief prieſts. But your poſition againſt him overthrows all his arguments, " The New-Teſtament church was not founded " till the reſurrection of Chriſt;" and therefore the government of the Jewiſh church can be no argument for the like under the New Teſtament: and, by parity of reaſon, it overthrows your arguments againſt the Independent.

In your book you ſtill contend, that what you bring from the Jewiſh church, and the government you plead for from thence, is moral; and by this you anſwer the objection taken from the abrogation of the Jewiſh polity, in one of the pages to which you now refer, by the *&c.* p. 285. 286. But in your Review, p. 11. you tell us, " That our bleſſed Lord " might have revealed another plan or ſcheme of government " in his houſe than what he hath done, I believe no Preſby- " terian will deny." And thus you ſtand clear of the ſixth inconſiſtency,

inconsistency, when you are cleared as to one thing that is subjoined; as to which you say, "But alas! I find another "thing subjoined," p. 12. "namely, That the Christian "churches were formed according to the synagogues; and "yet I would not suffer the church in Jerusalem to be like a "synagogue. Yes, I will allow it to be so as to the order of "its standing officers and some usages; but not as if it was "a single congregation." I expected you would here tell me of a classical synagogue, to which your classical church should answer; because you had spoken in your book, p. 281. of the separate and classical meetings of the rulers of the synagogues. But now you have thought fit to drop this, and acknowledge, that the synagogues were but single congregations, and deny that the church in Jerusalem was like a synagogue in this respect.

The Christian church, then, according to you, is not formed according to synagogues, as it is classical. Further, you do not pretend to point out any other court to which the synagogues were subjected, but that supreme catholic court that was erected at Jerusalem; and that court, as it behoved it to meet in the place which the Lord chused, the typical place, so it consisted of the high priest, the priests, and the Levites, distinguished by you from them that judged in the matters that you make purely civil. But you are not of the mind, that the ministers of the gospel answer to the set of officers that judged in that court, or that they have a relation to them; and you think they answer only to the ordinary prophets and teachers in the synagogues, that had no concern in the temple: seeing, therefore, you have never attempted to prove more than the subordination of synagogues, single congregations, to a catholic court under the Old Testament, and that court made up of typical officers, to whom the ministers of the gospel have no relation, and meeting in a typical place, tell me by what parity of reason your classical churches, and their subordination to provincial and national synods, the last acting independently of any catholic court on earth, come out of the synagogues and their subordination? or what is there in all this any way like the synagogues? Yet you say, you allow the church in Jerusalem to be like a synagogue, "as to the order of its standing officers;" but what say you of the chief ruler of the synagogue? "and some usages;" but I want to know what these usages are; and if this be one of them, That the scripture was read in the hearing of the whole synagogue; and this another, That any Jew had access

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to exhort publicly in the ſynagogue? Thus I have followed you upon the ſecond obſervation; and, holding what I ſaid in the concluſion of it as here again repeated, I go forward with you to

OBSERVATION III.

On which you review what you call my critical examinations.

And, 1. You are very ſhort upon your *at* and *of*, and perhaps ſubſtantial; but I can ſay nothing about it, till I underſtand it. You complain of my ſpending a great deal of time on this very trivial point, which you now ſay, "Though it was "yourſelf that brought it on the field, can neither affect the "cauſe the one way nor the other." Yet I find you ſtill ſpending time upon *at* and *of*, as thinking the cauſe ſome way affected by theſe; for, p. 36. 37. you have a criticiſm upon them, whereby I am made to underſtand, that the brethren that were *at* Lyſtra and Iconium, Acts xvi. 2. were only occaſionally there at that time; but if it had been ſaid, the brethren *of* Lyſtra and Iconium, they had certainly dwelt there. You give me a reaſon for your diſtinguiſhing between *at* and *of*, on Acts xv. 2. and xvi. 4. in theſe words, "I "conceive, that the elders *of* the church imports the pecu-"liar relation that is between that church and them; where-"as the elders *at* Jeruſalem carries no more in it than the "bare indication of the place where they were at the time, "without the leaſt hint of any ſtated relation they bore unto "that church."

Thus you find elders *of* a church, not *of* a place, but *at* a place; and ſo there is not, according to you, a relation betwixt an elder or elders, and a ſpot of ground, with all the people on that ſpot, by virtue of their living there. And thus you overthrow the intent of your firſt criticiſm on *at* and *of*. I told you before, that if you would ſpeak according the original, you muſt ſay *in* where you ſaid *at*; ſo, Acts xvi. 4. I read ἐν Ἱερουσαλεμ, as ℣ 2. ἐν Λυστροις. And, according to your criticiſm, when I read Philip. i. 1. "The ſaints which are *at* "Philippi, with the biſhops and deacons," I am not to underſtand, that theſe reſided in that city; for I am not to conclude more but the indication of the place where they were at the time; and ſo, for ought I know, it might be an aſſembly of ſaints, biſhops, and deacons met in Philippi at that time.

time. But then what becomes of the Presbyterian argument for many bishops in one church, taken from these words? The like may be said of Rev. ii. 24. You say further on Rev. ii. and Acts xx. 17. "The elders *of* the church expres-"seth the relation between the elders and the church; "whereas had it been said the elders *at* the church, no more "could have been concluded than the bare indication of the "place where they were at the time." Here you shift in *the church* in the room of *the city* or *place*, which alters your criticism a little, but adds nothing to its strength, unless you affirm, that these words, Acts xx. 28. "The flock, εν ω, "the Holy Ghost, hath made you overseers," express not the relation betwixt these overseers and that flock, but only signify, that they were there when they were made overseers. And perhaps you will alledge, that when Peter says, "the "elders," τους εν ὑμιν, 1 epist. chap. 5. ỳ 1. he does not express any relation betwixt these elders and the Christians among whom they were, but only that they were among them at the time. Thus I am of the mind you have succeeded no better in your second critical effort upon *at* and *of* than in the first.

2. You spend more time on επι το αυτο, but to as little purpose: for as I can understand you, the great thing you say in defence of your criticism on Acts iv. 25. 26. 27. compared with Psal. ii. 1. 2. against what was alledged by me, is this, "That, in the judgment of all the apostles, the rulers that "were gathered together, επι το αυτο, are the kings, Herod, "and Pontius Pilate." And you propose this question to me, Who hold the *rulers* there to signify the *rulers of Israel?* "But are not all kings rulers, though all rulers are not kings? "And if so, they cannot be excluded here; nay, the apostles "expresly include them." But let me also inquire, If, where kings and rulers are distinguished, we must not understand by rulers, these that are not kings? You give me another question, "Have they any where here made a distinc-"tion between the rulers and the kings, or insinuate, that "we are only to understand the Jewish rulers?" You answer this question yourself, and say, "No, it is only the "people of Israel who are charged." But I am not satisfied in this answer, nor in the reason that supports it; for it is plain to me, that the kings of the earth and the rulers are as much distinguished, ỳ 26. and Psalm ii. 2. as the heathen and the people are, ỳ 25. and Psalm ii. 1. And if the rulers of the Jews be neither intended by the word *rulers*, ỳ 26. nor any way pointed at in that designation, *the people of Israel*,

ỳ 27.

℣ 27. they are not all charged with the death of Christ here, where there is so particular mention of the parties concerned in it; which is a wonder, considering the hand they had in it. And whereas you say, "It is only the people of Israel "who are charged, and the charge of his death is on the "Jews, upon the whole nation, because done by their insti-"gation and connivance, Acts ii. 23. If this only exclude the rulers of the people, and if when you say the Jews and the whole nation, you except the rulers, then you say something to the purpose; but at the same time you speak what cannot be supported by Acts ii. 23. and what is plainly contrary to the truth of the thing, Matth. xxvii. 1. 2. 12. 13. 17. 20. Mark xv. 1. 4. 11. Luke xxiii. 13.—24. And how the death of Christ could be charged on the whole nation of Israel, without charging especially the rulers with it, who were, when assented to by the Jews whom they ruled, as much the nation and people of Israel as Herod and Pontius Pilate were the kings of the earth, is not easy to be imagined.

There is nothing more manifest in the book of Acts, than that the apostles charged the Jewish rulers with the death of Christ, Acts iii. 17. v. 27. 28. 29. 30. So that I cannot understand how you came to cite Acts ii. 23. to shew the contrary. And if you had considered the context, you might have seen, that the apostles Peter and John were just come from the presence of the Jewish rulers, where Peter had been saying, ℣ 8. 10. 11. "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of "Israel, be it known unto you, and to all the people of "Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom "ye crucified, — This is the stone which was set at nought "of you builders." And you might also have perceived, that this same company, in the words following these in debate, speak with reference to the late threatenings of these rulers against the apostles, ℣ 17. 18. and say ℣ 29. "And "now, Lord, behold their threatenings;" plainly declaring, that these rulers that had been gathered together against Christ, both with Herod and with Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, were now threatening them. How then could you imagine, that the apostles and their company were here speaking nothing of the rulers of the Jews, and making no application of the 2d Psalm to them, but to Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews, in distinction from them, when it is so manifest they are especially pointed at?

Now, Sir, I say again, that in Luke xxiii. I find both

Herod and his men of war gathered together againſt Chriſt, with the people of Iſrael, rulers and ruled, and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles with him, gathered together with the people of Iſrael, rulers and ruled; I find the kings of the earth, Pilate ſtanding up, and the Jewiſh rulers gathered together before him, againſt Chriſt; and Herod ſtanding up, and the Jewiſh rulers gathered together before him, againſt Chriſt; and I ſtill inquire, what more ſays the text? And where is the text in the New Teſtament, from which it can be made appear, that the phraſe επι το αυτο cannot there ſignify *in one place*, or *in the ſame place?* You cite Acts iii. 1. But were not Peter and John together in one place, when going up into the temple, walking together? Next you have Acts iv. 26. of which we have been ſpeaking. Then you bring 1 Cor. xiv. 23. where the evidence of the text obliged our tranſlators, as good grammarians, and as little Independent as yourſelf to render it *in one place*. And then you have Luke xvii. 35. which you may compare with Matth. xxiv. 41. and ſee if you can fetch any argument from thence to exclude *one place* from the meaning of επι το αυτο there. Your grammar upon it, and the various tranſlations of it by learned men, while all muſt own it ſometimes ſignifies *in the ſame place*, ſignify nothing, till one text be produced in the New Teſtament, where it can be proven, that it muſt be tranſlated otherwiſe. And let me tell you, after what I have ſaid, this has never yet been done.

But I had almoſt forgot the new ſtate of your queſtion to me on Acts iv. 26. You put the queſtion again thus, "Whe-" ther Herod and Pontius Pilate, the kings of the earth, and " the rulers, were gathered together in one place againſt the " Lord and his Chriſt?" Though this ſtate of it be as little agreeable to the text as the former, and ſo as little needing any anſwer from me; yet becauſe you ſay, that, by my own confeſſion, Herod and Pontius Pilate did not gather together in one place againſt Chriſt, I now think it proper to tell you, that Luke xxiii. 12. hinders me from confeſſing, that theſe whom you call the kings of the earth and the rulers, even Herod and Pontius Pilate, did not meet together in one place againſt Chriſt. And I do not underſtand what you intend by ſaying, "That the people of Iſrael did not gather together " into Pilate's judgment-hall, John xviii. 28." ſeeing your intention cannot be to ſhew, that they were not gathered in one place with Pilate, becauſe you ſaw the contrary in the 29th verſe. I am ſtill of the mind, that they who underſtood επι το αυτο here to ſignify *in this city*, took the meaning of

of it to be *in one place*; for ſhould it be uſed to ſignify *one ſuch place as a city*, as it would not in that caſe point to one houſe, ſo it would not point to diſtinct places and diſtinct aſſemblies; there behoved to be another word for that, while the meaning of επι το αυτο is ſtill *in one place*; and there is no one place to which it can be applied, wherein there are not in ſome ſenſe many places. And when we do not read of the houſe in Jeruſalem where Pilate and the Jews met together, John xviii. 28. 29. yet we are ſure they met ſo as to ſpeak together face to face in that place; and ſo likewiſe did Herod and they.

As to Acts ii. 44. you muſt get another argument to prove that επι το αυτο there ſignifies different ſpots or houſes in Jeruſalem, than any that can be drawn from their eating their meat from houſe to houſe, or from their breaking bread in that common eating, plainly diſtinct from the ſacred breaking of bread, and eating the Lord's ſupper in the church, when they were all επι το αυτο. Compare 1 Cor. xi.

Ὁμοθυμαδον has not the ſame import with επι το αυτο, but imports, as where you find the two together, Acts ii. 1. the perſonal concurrence of ſeverals in the ſame action, as they of Tyre and Sidon, with whom Herod was diſpleaſed, came to him, that is, the managers and actors in the chief government of Tyre and Sidon. You uſe too much freedom with Acts viii. 6. 10. when you attribute what is ſaid in the 10th verſe to Philip, while it is ſpeaking of the heed given to Simon Magus: for you ſay, "Acts viii. 6. the Samaritans are "ſaid with one accord to give heed to Philip, even from the "leaſt to the greateſt, ℣ 10."

3. You drop your former reaſon why *the whole church*, and *they all*, could not conſtruct; and you differ from the tranſlators, who, by the parentheſis, plainly make for me. And I am ſtill ſurpriſed with your imagination, that you ſpeak according to the judgment of the tranſlators, when you would have the apoſtles within the parentheſis, and the whole church without, dealing with it as you did with Solomon's porch; but now you grant that the whole church was in Solomon's porch; yet you will not let the text ſay ſo. You give a freſh proof of your ability for criticiſm upon this head; for now you bring forth two poſitions in place of the former, to ſhew, that *they all* cannot be conſtructed with *the whole church*. The firſt ſeems to be this, that *the whole church* is not the immediate antecedent of *they all*, and ſo cannot be conſtructed with it. But by this rule, *they all*

cannot be conſtructed with *the apoſtles*, but with *the people*, its immediate antecedent. And if you be to eſtabliſh this as an univerſal rule, That the relative muſt be conſtructed with its immediate antecedent, you will make odd work with the ſcripture, if you make not ſome exceptions; as, for inſtance, 2 Theſſ. ii 8. 9. Next you tell me, "The relative "and the antecedent muſt be in the ſame gender, and that "where the antecedent is a collective noun." And you affirm, "That the relatives and the antecedents are in the "ſame gender in the texts that I noted down to you;" perhaps imagining, that no reader that underſtands language would trouble himſelf to caſt his eyes on 2 Theſſ. i. 1. 2. 3. And I doubt not but you will affirm, that the relative and antecedent collective noun are in the ſame gender, Acts xxiv. 20. 21. I am clear, from the apoſtle's argument and plain ſcope, that *they*, Acts xv. 11. conſtructs with *fathers*; but the difference of the gender could not hinder *they* to conſtruct with *the nations*, or elſe there is wrong conſtruction in that chapter, which I will not eaſily acknowledge. See, for inſtance, ℣ 17. I muſt tell you, criticiſm requires more ſedate and nice circumſpection, than perhaps either you or I have leiſure or ability for; and we may ſee that it is not ſafe in all caſes to truſt to learned critics, even where they are poſitive: And therefore we may leave it to others of more ability and leiſure, while we are employed to better purpoſe.

You charge me here with ſetting light of the context, and you repeat this ſeveral times in your letter. The foundation of this charge, ſo far as I can underſtand, is, That when you dealt ſo with the text and context, as you deal with Acts viii. 6. 10. I told you what the text ſaid, and did not diſſemble as to the context. And my anſwer to your charge is plainly this, That I am for taking all the help unto the underſtanding of the text that the context will afford me; but I am not for making the context to be the text: And herein I differ from you, who charge me with making light of the context, for no other reaſon that I know, but becauſe I will not ſay, that the context is the text.

4. You ſay, "I thought you was in my mercy as to a "feaſt in Jeruſalem, when Paul went up," Acts xxi.; and ſo you complain of my marking the page in that caſe. And thus, it ſeems, whether I mark your pages or not, you will be ſure to mark my baſe intentions. I own I could not underſtand the ground of your mighty confidence, in demanding a proof for my inſinuation, that there was a feaſt in Jeruſalem

ruſalem when Paul went up; but now I perceive it was your ſkill in metaphyſics, and your ability thereby to deny conſequences, which even an Independent would bluſh to deny. And I have learned, from the ſample of your metaphyſics on this and ſome other heads, that it is in vain for me to impugn you, even though you ſhould deny the plaineſt fact recorded in the ſcriptures.

As to your partial way of quoting Acts ix. 31. to prove the multiplication of the church in Jeruſalem, you do not make any defence of your partiality in citing the text, which was the thing complained of; and ſo I have you convicted on that point, but not ſilenced, as long as you can talk beſide the purpoſe. For, as to that text and Acts xii. 24. you come off, ſaying, "That Jeruſalem had her ſhare," and you make the beſt of that you can; for that city was largeſt, and therefore would then have the largeſt ſhare. But you recover yourſelf fully on this head, and come off in triumph, by means of a proof you have found here for a church in the ſingular number, containing under it many ſingle churches. And this is the argument in your own words, "For it is ſaid, Acts xii. "1. *Herod ſtretched forth his hand to vex certain of the* "*church.* This, I hope, was not only the church in Jeru- "ſalem, nor the church as inviſible, *Quo minime credas gur-* "*gite piſcis erit.*" Your hope here ſeems to be very firm, but what the ground of this hope is, I cannot tell, if it be not this, that "Herod ſtretched forth his hand to vex cer- "tain of all the churches," that could receive additions by the growth and multiplication of the word after he died; or that Herod could not perſecute the inviſible church, no more than Saul could perſecute its inviſible head; and upon ſuch like grounds of hope, you may expect to find your fiſh in any pool, yea, and find it, according to that, *Crede quod habes et habes.*

You give two reaſons, to ſhew, that all the myriads of believing Jews, Acts xxi. were members of the church in Jeruſalem.

The firſt is, "Becauſe they were not ſuch as could bear "any witneſs againſt Paul, but by hearſay; they are inform- "ed of thee." And, to ſtrengthen what you ſay on this head, it ſeems to me that the text diſtinguiſhes the myriads of believing Jews that were zealous of the law, from the Jews among the Gentiles whom Paul taught; and ſo from the believing Jews his diſciples among the Gentiles, who are not declared to be zealous of the law. Yet there were

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by this time multitudes of believing Jews, zealous of the law, throughout Judea and Galilee, and in other parts, (beſide theſe among the Gentiles taught by Paul), who were not members of the church in Jeruſalem; but, in their zeal for the law, were reſorting from time to time to the feaſts in Jeruſalem, and to the feaſt that then was. Now none of the believing Jews, but thoſe that heard him teaching the Jews among the Gentiles, could witneſs againſt him, but by hear-ſay: and is it probable to you, that all other believing Jews, even all of them that were zealous of the law, were members of the church in Jeruſalem?

Your ſecond reaſon is, "It is plain, thoſe only of Jeruſa-"lem could receive ſatisfaction by Paul's conformity to the "law at that time, and not others." But how is it plain that other believing Jews, zealous of the law, beſide the members of the church in Jeruſalem, were not in Jeruſalem at that time? Have you made it plain, that there was no feaſt at Jeruſalem at that time, and that the believing Jews in other places, zealous of the law, were not there? I thought that the utmoſt drift of all your ſtretches on that head, was to ſhew, that it was poſſible Paul did not get up to Jeruſalem at the time he propoſed, though he made all the haſte he could to be there, or that it did not involve a contradiction to ſay, that, though Paul made haſte on his journey to be at Jeruſalem on the day of Pentecoſt, and though the Jews of Aſia were there at that time, yet there was no feaſt in Jeruſalem at that time. And is it thus plain to you, that thoſe only of Jeruſalem could receive ſatisfaction by Paul's conformity to the law at that time? Or would you ſuffer an Independent to ſee things plain at this rate? But, though it be moſt plain from the ſacred hiſtory, that there was a feaſt in Jeruſalem at that time; yet though there had been none, what readier way was there to ſatisfy all the believing Jews, that were zealous of the law every where, than to ſatisfy thoſe of Jeruſalem, by conforming publicly to the law at that time?

5. You do not meddle with what I ſaid touching your criticiſms on πας το πληθος; and beſide ſome reflections and a complaint about pages, and references to pages of your book, to oblige the reader, perhaps weary of your book before, to read it over again, I find nothing but what is by no means to the purpoſe; namely, that the churches in the firſt three centuries, according to King, were not independent of councils. For the queſtion was, if the πας το πληθος of each

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of these churches came together in one place to observe the ordinances of worship? And if each of them had but one altar, or many? And if the πᾶν το πλῆθος, under the care of a primitive presbyter or bishop, came together in one place to eat the Lord's supper? And all your answer is, they were not independent. I own, as I said before, they were some way dependent on councils after the rise of the one bishop, and as a consequent of that; but the one bishop is with you an innovation, and so is that consequent of it.

6. You call the sixth instance a pitiful point; yet you take some pains on it, and I shall not put you to further trouble about it. Only, as from this and other instances you may learn more modesty in your assertions, so I find, when you are extricating yourself on this pitiful point, a point of some importance casts up to you. It seems several things were wanting among the disciples gathered by the gospel in the several cities of Crete, who had nothing for the New-Testament scripture that we have now, but the apostles, prophets, and evangelists, and among the rest of the things that were wanting, elders or bishops, most necessary unto the churches, seem to have been wanting in these churches. The scripture speaks nothing of elders there before, but seems to say they were wanting: and as little does it speak of Paul's leaving any of his ministers, the evangelists, there but Titus. This straitens you, and you imagine it will straiten me likewise. For you say, "Then he was to ordain them by himself. But "you will first give an instance in the New Testament, that "a single person did ordain, and then reconcile such a prac-"tice with Matth. xviii. 20." I am not sure what you mean by ordination; but because you speak of a single person's ordaining, I imagine you take ordination and the imposition of hands for the same thing. And if this be your mind, I must differ from you, till I see that hands were laid on the first elders or bishops of the first Christian church, Acts i.; and till I find that Apollos became a New-Testament minister by the imposition of hands, Acts xviii. 26. 27. 28. I do not question that when elders were ordained where there were elders, hands were laid on them; because I find a presbytery laying hands on deacons when they were ordained, Acts vi. and on an evangelist when he was called and set apart to that work, 1 Tim. iv. 14. But I am far from being clear to say, that ordination consists in the imposition of hands; neither dare I say, that no man is a minister of the gospel, but he that

that is ordained by the impoſition of the hands of a ſcriptural preſbytery.

By this you may ſee, that I am of the mind Titus was not ſingle or alone in the ordination of the elders in Crete, though there was none in office there but himſelf when theſe elders were ordained. And it ſeems plain to me there were no elders ſet among the diſciples in Crete at their firſt converſion; becauſe I reckon the Apoſtle obſerved the ſame rule in ſetting apart of elders or biſhops that he gives to Timothy, 1 Tim. v. 22. And it behoved a biſhop to be no novice, or one newly planted, but one holding faſt the faithful word as he had been taught. Becauſe there was not time ſufficient for ſetting apart biſhops ſo qualified in Crete while the apoſtle could ſtay there, he left Titus behind him to ſupply his place, and do according to his direction, what he himſelf could not ſtay to ſee done. We do not read of any other evangeliſt or officer left there but Titus alone; and where the ſcripture is ſilent, ſo muſt we. So that, if you will have it that Titus laid hands on theſe elders or biſhops in their ordination, then here is an inſtance in the New Teſtament of the laying on of hands in the ordination of elders by no officer but one; yea further, an inſtance of the ordination of elders where it cannot appear there was any bearing office acting in it but one. Neither is there any difficulty in reconciling this with Matth. xviii. 20. where our Lord ſpeaks of two or three elders ſet in a church; and this will never apply to the caſe of a church wanting elders, or deſtitute of a preſbytery, that is, two elders at leaſt. It is the law of Chriſt that makes elders; and the Chriſtians in the ſeveral cities of Crete had that law no otherwiſe but from the mouth of the apoſtle, or Titus his miniſter in his place, and under his direction. But a church now, deſtitute of a preſbytery, and having that law written to them in the New Teſtament, which the Cretians had from the Apoſtle, and from the mouth of Titus, and obſerving that law to their power, may have elders, and get a preſbytery among them, as well as the diſciples in any city of Crete could have elders when Titus was with them.

7. As to the next inſtance, touching the word *brethren*, your buſineſs was to prove, that it denoted always perſons in office, and even when diſtinguiſhed from officers, as Acts xv. or you ſaid nothing to your purpoſe. But have you now manifeſted, that the word *brethren* is any where by itſelf uſed to diſtinguiſh perſons in office from thoſe that are not in office? Nothing like it that I ſee; and I told you before I did not ſee how

how it could be done. You say now, "The brethren in "Acts xv. have such work ascribed them, and are joined "with others in jurisdictional acts, which, in very clear terms, "discover they were brethren in office; and on this founda "tion I have called them so." But this is only an assertion of the grand point to be proved, and you must look about for another mean of proof than the import of the word *brethren*, from whence you was bringing a proof for it before. You tell me, you have a strong imagination that the name *brethren* is taken in the sense you have been pleading for, Acts xv. 7.; on which text you propose a question to me thus: "Sir, was the choice made among us private persons?" You also answer your question, and say, "Peter himself was "a person in office; and this choice was made out of the "multitude, to which he addressed himself: but if the "choice was made out of this multitude, then these out of "which the choice was made must be supposed to be in of- "fice, or in some measure qualified with him for that office "of preaching to the Gentiles."

Here you acknowledge that Peter, Acts xv. 7. is addressing himself to that multitude out of which God made choice of him to preach the gospel first to the Gentiles, *i. e.* to Cornelius, and them with him, Acts x. before there was any church of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, or Cilicia. From this I have a strong imagination, that Peter is not addressing himself to a synod, whereof the officers of the churches in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, were constitutive members; but to a society that had a being before any church of the Gentiles was, and before there can be any pretence of a synod; for you do not so much as pretend a synod till Acts xv. and I reckon you imagine that you have there the first synod. And the *us* among whom the choice was made are, as is plain from the whole of Peter's discourse, and from this text, Jews distinguished from the Gentiles; so that he is neither addressing himself to the Gentiles personally present, nor represented there; but he is addressing himself to the company that sent the epistle containing the decrees to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.

Again, by *us* I can imagine no other society to be intended but that same which at the beginning received the gift of the Holy Ghost, even the first church of the Jews, the church in Jerusalem; which, notwithstanding of all that had passed over it, was still in being when Peter was here speaking; and this my imagination has some foundation in the situation of

us in ℣ 8. 9. When Peter has done discoursing to this society, and thereupon they all gave ear to the information of Paul and Barnabas, James addresses them again thus, ℣ 13. "Men and brethren, hearken unto me," ℣ 14. "Simeon "hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles." ℣ 19. "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them "which from among the Gentiles are turned to God. But "that we write unto them," &c. And when his speech to them is concluded, it is said, ℣ 22. "Then pleased it the "apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen "men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Bar-"nabas." ℣ 23. "And wrote letters by them after this "manner, The apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting "unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles," &c. This is that company to which Peter addresses himself when he said, "Men, brethren, ye know how that God made choice "among us." And these are they that received Paul and Barnabas when they were come to Jerusalem, ℣ 4. These were all brethren, but some of them were also apostles, some of them were brethren, and also elders or leading men, ηγουμενοι among the brethren; and some of them could have no designation, importing a distinction from others by office; and therefore are called only brethren, ℣ 23.; and this is the whole church, ℣ 22. distinguished from the office-bearers, who there get their distinguishing titles.

Of this company, whereof Peter was one, he says, "God "made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth "should hear the word of the gospel." But you infer from his being in office, and from his being made choice of among them to preach, that it behoved them all to be in office, or qualified with him for that office of preaching to the Gentiles. And, by the same kind of reasoning, you might infer, they were all apostles; and so might any man infer, from one's being made choice of among the members of the general assembly to preach in India, that all the lay-elders and commissioners from boroughs are certainly preachers, or qualified for that office of preaching; which, I conceive, would be notoriously false. And yet we must see the strength of these kind of inferences, or be declared to have cast off reason as a mean of judging of things sacred. Next, you make the brethren, Acts xxi. 17. to be the same thing with the elders, ℣ 18.; for still where brethren and elders are distinctly mentioned, you must have the word *brethren* to signify *elders*. Your reason for this is, that the private Christi-

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ans were ſtumbled at Paul; and, in order to appeaſe them, he was adviſed to purify himſelf: and it is not eaſy to believe, that it was theſe that received him gladly. But was it not eaſy for you from the text and context, ℣ 19. to believe that his firſt meeting with the elders was after the brethren had received him gladly? And was there any difficulty in believing, that Paul viſited his peculiar friends and acquaintances among the members of the church ſo ſoon as he came to the city, or they him, before he went into James and the elders; and that theſe were not all the multitude whom it behoved to come together, when they ſhould hear that he was come? Further, you might have perceived, that even the elders that received him, and glorified God on account of what he related to them, inſinuated to him, that, according to what was reported of him, he had gone a conſiderable ſtep beyond what they had written and concluded, Acts xv. And they deſire him to let it appear to the people, that he himſelf walked orderly, and kept the law. And here is the iſſue of your criticiſm and reaſoning on the word *brethren*.

8. Upon the next inſtance you are found to own, that you can err, ſo far as not accurately to expreſs a ſentence. And, after this condeſcenſion, you give the ſentence another turn, *i.e.* according to your cuſtom, you put another in the place of it; for you ſay, "Upon a review of it, it ought to have run thus: "yet Judas and Silas were no more members of the church "of Jeruſalem than prophets at Antioch, though ſome time "members there. The plain force of the argument is, that "in Jeruſalem was the firſt Chriſtian church, and from thence "extraordinary officers came, or were ſent by the apoſtles, "to aſſiſt in planting and watering the other churches in the "world." But I am not yet able to perceive the accuracy of your new ſentence, nor the force of your argument, if it be ſtill intended to prove, that the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem, with that whole church, could not ſend Judas and Silas to Antioch; and therefore it muſt have been a ſynod that ſent them. To prove this you alledged before, "That Judas and Silas, though they were of the company "that ordained the decrees, were not members of the church "of Jeruſalem, but prophets at Antioch, and ſome time "members of that church, Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. and xv. 32. "35. Now, what power, ſaid you, had the elders of Jeru"ſalem to miſſionate Judas and Silas, when they were not "members of that church, but prophets at Antioch, unleſs "they had been a part of that ſynodical meeting?" Theſe

were your words, and this was your argument. But after you yourself are forced to withdraw the foundation and strength of it, you still think the force of it remains.

In your new sentence, which you would have me to think is more accurately expressed than the former, you acknowledge, that Judas and Silas were some time members of the church of Jerusalem; and in that which you call the force of your argument, you acknowledge, that from the first Christian church in Jerusalem extraordinary officers came, or were sent by the apostles, to assist in planting and watering other churches: and I am sure you do not read of Judas and Silas, some time members there, their coming from thence, or being sent by the apostles, to any other church, till Acts xv.

But the force of your argument is, "That when Judas "and Silas became extraordinary officers, they were no more "members of the church in Jerusalem; and so could not be "sent from thence by the apostles and the elders, with the "brethren of that church." Yet if I should tell you, that, at this rate, there were no ordinary officers, having any fixed relation to any church, or members of any particular church in your synod, but the elders of the church in Jerusalem that received Paul and Barnabas when he came there; you would readily answer me, according to your scheme and way of arguing on Acts xv. That they all acted there as elders related to the particular churches from which they were sent, and that were represented by them in the synod. And when you use to take it so ill, that any should speak of extraordinary officers acting as such in that assembly, Acts xv. you ought yourself to beware of considering extraordinary officers as such in that passage, and of betaking yourself to that shift, which you would have us believe is but a pitiful one when used by your adversaries. According to the notion I have of the synod you plead for in Acts xv. it had as little power to commissionate extraordinary officers as such, as you can pretend the particular church in Jerusalem had. And I desire you, if you will maintain your scheme, to keep by it, and speak consistently with it; which I humbly conceive will recommend it more than this your way. Now, though men endued with extraordinary gifts, might perhaps use a greater liberty in going from one church to another, where there was more need and use for the exercise of their gift, as Silas chose to remain at Antioch; yet did they not act their part as members of that particular church where they resided ordinarily,

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as Paul and Barnabas at Antioch? And had not that church power to send them, as the teachers as well as prophets in the church at Antioch sent away Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiii.; and if the church in Antioch had power to commissionate Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, had not the church in Jerusalem as much power to send Judas and Silas members there unto Antioch? And if the extraordinary gift made them no members, and so not capable to be sent, was not the case the same with Paul and Barnabas at Antioch?

Because prophesying, with you, does not make a person an officer, but being called a prophet, and because that extraordinary gift, when bestowed, made a man, according to you, no more a member of the particular church where he was before; let me inquire, for my own satisfaction, if these prophets that prophesied by revelation, 1 Cor. xiv. 29. 30. 31. 32. were then members of that church; and if they were all church-officers and elders in that church while they prophesied in it? the reason of my question is, That I find none debarred from the exercise of that gift in that church and its assemblies, but women; and though the members did not all prophesy, as they did not all speak with tongues; yet the Apostle says, "He would they all spake with tongues, but "rather that they prophesied," ℣ 5. & 31. And I am not ready to think, that he would have the whole church to be elders. Till I be some way cleared as to this, I can never be satisfied, that it can be inferred from Judas and Silas their being endued with the gift of prophecy in the church at Jerusalem, and so called *prophets*, that they were elders. As it cannot be denied, that there were elders in the first churches that had the gift of prophecy, and so were prophets; so it would not be easy to prove, that brethren that were no elders had not that gift, and that they that had that gift in any measure could not be called prophets. Whether Judas and Silas were of the one sort or the other, it alters not the case to me, so as either way to do the least service to your cause or your argument. For if you will affirm they were elders, from the word ηγουμενοι, applied to them, Acts xv. 22. compared with Heb. xiii. 7. 17. then you can no more infer, that the brethren among whom they were ηγουμενοι, were also ηγουμενοι, than you can infer from 1 Pet. v. that the people, among whom were these elders, were also elders. Thus I have attended to you in your critical lucubrations, serving to support your scheme of a synod on Acts xv. For as to what you say, according to your distinction of *at* and *of*, upon

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Acts xvi. 2. 4. and Acts xv. 2. I have told you enough before.

And so I come, in the last place, on this head, to see if you come off any better with your criticisms on the import of the word *church*. And here I wanted you should prove to me, that the disciples of Christ throughout the world are any otherwise called the church, but in so far as, in the judgment of charity, they may be reckoned to be of the "general assembly " and church of the first-born." But all the proof I find is in the positions you are pleased to lay down, after my thesis, touching the distinction betwixt the invisible and the visible church: from which positions you infer, in the close, that when Christ gave officers to his church, it was not to her as invisible, but as visible. I shall take the trouble to go over these positions, because it seems to me you imagine, they contain a confutation of my thesis, and also clear your way to the vindication of the texts you have brought to prove a catholic church visible.

As to what you say, in the first place, of the twofold vocation or calling, the one merely external by the word, the other internal and invisible by the Spirit: If you mean any other call of the Spirit, but his enabling a sinner to comply with the word, and that by means of the word itself, I cannot assent to it. Neither do I see that the distinction here laid down by you is in the two branches of it so comprehensive as it ought to be: for besides that which you call merely external, and the internal, mentioned Rom. viii. 30. I conceive an influence of the word and Spirit upon some, that yet, in the issue, prove reprobates, which goes further than merely external calling; for your merely external calling is unto them that make light of it, and persecute the servants, as well as to them that are gathered together by it, and come as guests to the wedding; and among these again you find some not having the " wedding-garment," Matth. xxii. 2. to 14.

Next, You tell me, that, agreeable to this twofold call, there is a twofold faith, the one common, which is to be found in the reprobate, Acts viii. 13. Matth. xiii. 20. the other saving, and only in the elect, Tit. i. 1. Gal. v. 6. And if you reckon this faith twofold, in respect of the object or thing believed, as if there were one faith of the external call of the word, and another faith of the internal call of the Spirit, I cannot assent to it. I am for no faith but the faith of the word. But if you mean a faith proceeding from the call

call of the word, as it is merely external, without any concurring influence of the Spirit upon mens ſouls, engaging them any way to comply with it, there is no ſuch faith ſpoken of in the texts you cite for it. The ſcripture does indeed ſpeak of "the devils their believing and trembling;" but the difference between that common faith and ſaving faith of the goſpel, ariſes not from your difference betwixt the call merely external and the call internal by the Spirit; but from the difference betwixt the common and ſaving influence of that ſame Spirit, by that ſame goſpel, upon the ſouls of men. And if your diſtinction betwixt the viſible and inviſible church ſtand upon this twofold faith, then the objects of the goſpel-call that come not the length even of the common faith, which may be found in the reprobate, are not members of the viſible church.

Then you ſpeak of a twofold ſanctity or holineſs, the one external and federal, Ezra ix. 2. Rom. xi. 16. 1 Cor. vii. 4. the other internal and abſolute, which is only to be found in the regenerate, Pſal. xciii. 5. And I own there is a twofold holineſs, typical, as that of the whole nation of Iſrael, and real or true, as that of the heavenly nation, or kingdom of heaven, the antitype of that earthly nation; but both theſe are federal. Again, there is a real holineſs, as there is a real covenant-relation betwixt God and all the true children of the kingdom of heaven, that are "born from above," and upon whoſe hearts he writes his Law. And there is an apparent holineſs, as there is an apparent covenant-relation betwixt God and all them whom he calls us to look upon as children of the kingdom of heaven, and points out to us in his word as objects of brotherly love; and this is the appearance of the real, as it can appear to us in this world, and both theſe are to me intended Pſal. xciii. 5. But how you come to call the external only federal, I cannot underſtand.

Further, you tell me, "That, anſwerable to theſe, there "is a two-fold communion allowed to ſuch as are within the "bond of the covenant, the one merely in its external pri-"vileges, and the other in thoſe which are ſaving alſo." If you mean a communion in the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, and the appearance of that, as in baptiſm, which belongs to every viſible member of the true myſtical catholic body of Chriſt, and to none elſe; a communion in the body and blood of Chriſt, and a communion in that bread and cup which it ſhews forth; a communion in the one faith, or in that

that word whereby we are united to Christ, as it is believed in the heart, and a communion in it as it is confessed with the mouth; a communion in the Spirit of Christ, as he is the worker of faith in the heart, and a communion in that Spirit as he is the author and worker of gifts, and enables us to make the scriptural confession of that faith. I say, if this be your meaning, you say well; but these two communions have a very near relation to one another. And while any person has a right, according to Christ's law, to that which you call a communion merely in external privileges, neither you nor I have any ground to think otherwise of that person, but that he has communion in those privileges which you call saving; for when their profession in the event proves false to us, then as to us they have no right to the external communion. You say, "That these that have a right to the external commu-"nion, are some way said to be ingrafted into Christ, though "they do not abide in him, nor bring forth fruit, John xv. "2. 6." But if they be some way said to be in Christ himself, according to that scripture, and Rom. x. 7. 8. John iv. 15. *&c.* may they not in that same way be said to be in that catholic mystical church, which is his body? And as these who are thus in Christ are said to be taken away, so we are told, that Christ, at his coming, will gather out of his kingdom "all things that offend, and them which do iniquity:" These, therefore, were in that his kingdom, which still stands after they are gathered out of it, that is, the holy heavenly kingdom of Jesus Christ; and they are taken out of it as the fruitless branches in Christ are taken away from him, and as the man, among the guests at the wedding, wanting the wedding-garment, is taken away from among the guests, and from the wedding. Thus, this one text brought by yourself, serves at once to establish my thesis, and to overthrow your arguings for a catholic visible church, drawn from these scriptures that speak of persons being in the church and kingdom of Christ, who yet are not elect, and believe not with that true and lively faith that worketh by unfeigned love.

9. Lastly, You lay down this position, "That from all "these considerations, there ariseth also a twofold face, "or form of the church of Christ here on earth, the one "visible, which consists in an open profession of the "Christian faith, and practice of the duties of worship; the "other spiritual, invisible, and mystical, which owes its ori-"ginal to election, and is consummate in a lively faith, which "worketh by love." What you mean by the spiritual, invisible,

visible, and mystical face or form of the church of Christ here on earth, I confess I do not understand: But not to insist on the words wherein you express the distinction, I shall tell you how far I own a distinction on this subject, according to what I have before laid down. There is one holy catholic church made up of all them in heaven and on the earth that are born of the Spirit; and this church is not itself to be seen till Christ appear; yet of this church every one in the earth that is, according to the law of Christ, an object of the Christian brotherly love, is a visible member, and is, to us, in that church by the law of Christ, and, as such, has a right to baptism, wherein we are all baptised into that one body; but many that are such, prove, in the issue, to have been no real members of that body, though they were visible members of it. There is also a church, consisting of visible members of the heavenly church, visibly joined together in the profession of the Christian faith, hope, and charity, and assembling together in one place to partake of the Lord's supper, and to observe all Christ's institutions continuing stedfastly together in them; and in every such visible church, the mystical church is shewed forth and represented to us; but, besides this, I do not know of any visible face or form of a church upon the earth.

You tell me that your distinction is pointed out to us by the Apostle, John ii. 19. "They went out from us, but were "not of us. They went out from us," that is, say you, from the visible assembly of those who professed Christianity. But they were of the professors of Christianity; and the Apostle says, "they went out from us" of whom they were not, but appeared to be; and their going out manifested them not to be of *us*, of whom, if they had been really as they once appeared, they would no doubt have continued with *us*. So that the *us* from whom they went, are the very same with the *us* of whom they were not; that is, by your own acknowledgment, the society of the elect that are effectually called. And they went out from them, by going from that whereby they appeared to be of them, *i. e.* the right gospel-profession, and when they were gone, the Apostle reckoned all them that held fast the gospel-profession to be of that society, of which whosoever really is, they will continue. Wherefore this scripture, if you will consider it a little more narrowly, is indeed a great support to my thesis, and answers to the positions as I have laid them down; but not to yours, nor to your catholic visible church.

In the concluſion of your poſitions, you own what you ſeemed before to impugn, *viz.* "That it is agreeable to the "nature of this ſecret ſtate of man, which is only certainly "known to God, to diſcover itſelf ſo far as to give a cre-"dible ground of charity." But you add, "yet not ſo as if "it could be diſcovered in all by poſitive determination to be "really different from its counterfeits." And upon this I would aſk you, when you come to have that credible ground of charity, are you not bound to exerciſe that "charity that "thinketh no evil?" And who gave you power to go about to judge in a matter wherein God alone can judge, *i. e.* to diſcover it in any to be really different from its counterfeits? And ſeeing this neither can nor ought to be done by you, are not you charitably to judge it to be real and not counterfeit, while you have the credible ground of charity? Are not you therefore bound to look upon every one in whom this credible ground of charity is found, as a member of the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, and act toward him accordingly as did the apoſtles?

But after all, how flows this inference of yours from your poſitions? "Thus when Chriſt gave officers to his church, it "was not to her as inviſible but as viſible." Your next miſſive, if you condeſcend to continue the correſpondence, muſt ſatisfy us as to that.

Having laid down theſe things, you come next to the vindication of the texts attacked by me, as not importing a viſible but an inviſible church. But all that I ſay is, that they do not import a catholic viſible church diſtinct from the holy catholic myſtical church, and from the viſible churches of the ſaints, in every one of which that inviſible catholic body is ſhewed forth: And till you prove, that theſe texts can neither be underſtood of the one or the other of theſe, nor both, you cannot find your catholic viſible church in them.

You begin with the firſt, which is, 1 Cor. i. 2. connected with 1 Cor. xii. 28 and paſſing, for your own eaſe, what I ſay on that connection, under the notion of angry words and invectives, you contend, that it is your political catholic body that is meant, 1 Cor. xii. and not the inviſible or myſtical body. And you ſay ſeveral things in the proof of this. It is evident, ſay you, in that there were apoſtles, prophets, and teachers, ſet in this church, that it is not meant of the inviſible or myſtical body. This was ſaid before and anſwered; and the mere repetition of it cannot take off the anſwers. But you think you add, when you alledge, that the myſtical body

body is not political, *i. e.* as I take it, it has not the gifts of apoſtles, prophets, teachers, ſet in it, and is not this a mighty addition? That it is your catholic body political that is meant, you ſeem to prove thus: for, ſay you, Chriſt is the head by his ſpecial guidance and means, and the diſpenſation of his ordinances no leſs than myſtical by his ſpiritual influences. By which it ſeems you reckon Chriſt is not the head of the myſtical church, or the church of the firſt-born by his ſpecial guidance and means, and the diſpenſation of ordinances, and that he is not the head of any viſible church, but only of the myſtical, by his ſpiritual influences. Or if this be not what you are ſaying, let any man declare to me what you are ſaying to the purpoſe.

When you have repeated your aſſertion, contrary to plain ſcriptures brought to you in the Obſervations, that apoſtles, prophets, and teachers are not ſet in the myſtical body of Chriſt; you tell me, for the ſame reaſon it is not the ſingle church of Corinth that is meant. For what reaſon was not that church a political church, as you ſpeak? And were not theſe offices ſet in it as they were alſo before in the firſt viſible goſpel church in Jeruſalem? Yea, has not every ſuch church, to the end of the world, the apoſtles and prophets, that has the New Teſtament, as the church of the Jews in the time of our Lord, had Moſes and the prophets, and has not every ſuch church, by the law of Chriſt, teachers in it explaining upon the word of the apoſtles and prophets? You ſay the apoſtles which were ſet in this church were catholic officers, and had not their relation reſtricted to any particular church, having the whole world for their charge. This was all ſaid and anſwered before; and ſtill it ſeems your catholic church and the whole world are one and the ſame; but when theſe officers, to whom it ſeems you reckon it was peculiar not to have a reſtricted relation to any particular church, are gone; where is their charge? Or who ſucceeds them in that wherein they were diſtinguiſhed from the paſtors or elders, or biſhops of particular churches? But you have another argument on this text, which is, "They themſelves "were viſible meſſengers, and ſome of them no more but "only viſible," and, "that which is inviſible cannot, under "that notion, have a viſible miniſtry ſet into it." To this I anſwer, Is it mainly the men or the offices, the men or the gifts, that are ſpoke of in that text or context, and ſaid to be ſet in the church? And had not theſe offices and gifts a real

action upon the invisible body, and invisible as well as visible effects?

As the gifts of apostles, prophets, and evangelists had invisible effects in the first joining together of the invisible or mystical body of Christ, so has the gift of pastors and teachers upon this body in the edifying of it "till all its members "come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of "the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure "of the stature of the fulness of Christ." For this purpose these gifts had, and still have an influence on the unbelieving world, which is not the church, to gather men out of it, and bring them to the faith and the confession of it, and so add them both invisibly and visibly to the catholic mystical church; and thus these offices and gifts have both visible and invisible effects. They serve to gather men out of the world into the mystical church, and into the visible churches of the saints where they have an influence upon them, to confirm and establish them, to make them grow in the "unity of the faith "till they come to a perfect man." And before these offices and gifts, which were given unto the catholic mystical church, and for it, had influence upon the world, they were first set in a particular visible church of the saints; and from such churches their influence went out into the world, as I shewed you in the Observations. You next bring me the testimony of Hooker; as to which, I have told you something before, which I need not now repeat. And then you conclude what you have to say in vindication of your sense of this text, by telling me again what you think only makes a man a member of the body mystical, and that my judgment of charity can neither add nor pare in that point.

Truly, Sir, I am scarce able to discern what account you make of a person, in your judgment of charity about him; but I may know this, that if my judgment of charity, or your's either, be according to the law and rule of that judgment laid down by Jesus Christ in his word, we account every person a member of Christ and his mystical body of whom we make that judgment; and so he is to us a member of that body by the law of Christ: so that, in doing the deeds of brotherly love to that person, we do them to Christ the head, and to the whole body; and in persecuting any one whom we that cannot search mens hearts, are bound, by Christ's law, to look upon as a member of Christ, we are persecutors of that whole body. Men are not visible members of Christ and of his mystical body, according to your fancy

fancy or mine either, and our judgment can neither add nor pare as to his law in that point. It is his law that determines this matter to us, and requires of us accordingly, as we shall be answerable to him in that day, when what you here alledge will not stand for an excuse to us, in not looking upon his visible members, the least of them, as such, and in neglecting the duties of love to them, as to himself. It will be then but a mean shift to say, "When saw we thee," &c.

On Eph. iii. 10. you give me the same things over again; only you say, the body, ℣ 7. and Col i. 24. is your visible catholic body, because Paul was a minister of it, as I say he was a minister of the invisible head of the mystical body; and because he suffered for it, as I say he "endured all things for "the elects sakes," 2 Tim. ii. 10.; but perhaps you will alledge, they were invisible sufferings that he endured for the elect's sakes, because they are invisible. But the body, Eph. iii. 7. is the same of which the Apostle had been speaking, Eph. i. 10. 22. 23. and ii. 15. 16. and the body, chap. iv. 11. 12. is no other. So likewise the body whereof Paul calls himself a minister, and for which he suffered, Col. i. 24. 25. is that same of which he had been speaking, ℣ 18. 19. 20. And if you thus regard the context, you will see that Paul was a minister of the mystical body; and so you may add these texts to the text I gave you before, Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.

When you come to 1 Cor. x. 32. you turn the proof upon me, to whom you was proving your catholic visible church from this text; and say, because it is not proven to be the mystical church that is meant, therefore you take it for the body catholic visible. But you cannot make your catholic body visible to me in this text, till you prove, that it can neither be meant of the body mystical, nor of a particular church, nor of both: and this is what you have not yet done. You say the precepts here are negative and indefinite; and from this you infer, that they bind *semper et ad semper*, and must at the same time respect all places and persons. Well, what then? You say further, "In these travelling "times, some might give offence in one place, and some in "another, and one in many places." And what is the consequence of that? You say, "The whole body was li-"able to offence, though it was not by one man;" and so the object is set down indefinitely, thereby to comprehend the whole. Thus you think you have manifested, that it is not the mystical body that is meant. But this whole mysti-

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cal body is liable to offence, either by one man, or many men: for as when one apparent member of it is offended, the body is offended, so likewise when many; and the whole may be offended, even as the invisible head: and whether one man give it offence thus, or as many men, in as many places of the earth as the visible members of it are to be found, still the whole is offended, as I told you. For what I said of one is applicable to as many visible members of that true church as are any where offended, and as many as in all places and all times offend them.

When a man, or as many men as you please, offend a visible church, wherein that mystical body is shewed forth, they remarkably offend the mystical body, even as love to that body is most remarkably manifested in the deeds of love towards the representation of it in such a church. Thus the Corinthians, in offending the church of God in Corinth, whereof they were members, were capable of offending the whole mystical church; and what is said of it is applicable to any other church of the same kind, where Christians happen to be, as I told you. And I am still persuaded, that what is said to the church in Corinth is applicable to every such church to the end of the world. The Apostle speaks of their judging, and of his judging them that were within, in opposition to these without: and as the church in Corinth judged only its own members, so the Apostle is speaking of his judging a member of that church as if he had been present. And it does not appear that the apostles exercised church-discipline but upon church members, nor that they exercised it any where else but in a church where they happened to be, and acted as elders, 3 John 10. And if they had to do with many churches, it was because they were unto them in place of the New Testament, that every church has now complete. And if in this sense you say the churches are one, because they have one New Testament, as the visible rule of their government, I never reclaimed against this.

But still I am to seek as to the visible catholic body intended in this text. You say it is only the visible church that is capable of offence, and to receive satisfaction. But was not the visible church in Corinth, and is not any other such church, capable of offence, and of receiving satisfaction? And is not the catholic body mystical every way as capable of offence and satisfaction in its visible members, through whom it is injured in offence and persecution, as you can imagine your visible body to be! You will perhaps tell me, they all receive

receive satisfaction in their representatives, a general or catholic council. Yes, when that assembles and agrees about being offended and satisfied. But the head of the body mystical, and that body is satisfied when a sinner repents and observes the law of Christ, the rule of repentance. Yea, there is joy in that part of the church that is least visible to us "over one sinner that repenteth," or over a returning backslider; and that is now by far the greatest and most considerable part of this church. And you will find the Lord, in speaking of offences among the visible members of this church or kingdom of heaven, some way referring to this, and to the concern that "the innumerable company of angels" that belongs to this heavenly society have in this matter, Matth. xviii. 10. He speaks of the kingdom of heaven, into which none can enter "except they be converted, and become as "little children." He speaks of our "receiving or offend-"ing any one of these little ones," (who you say cannot be seen, and so not received or offended, and despised by us), and therein receiving or offending him and their father, and "the innumerable company of angels." He calls others besides these whom he would have us to account converted, "and the children of this kingdom, and of his father, the "world." When he speaks of a visible church, he speaks of it as consisting of these, and these only, whom he would have us to account such children; and therefore our brethren, and when they discover themselves not to be such, in trespassing and not hearing the visible church, whereof they are members, he bids us look upon them as the Jews did on Heathen men and publicans, and so not "children of the "kingdom of heaven;" and he declares, that what they "bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and what they "loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And after all this, will you yet say, that it is only the visible church that is capable of offence, and to receive satisfaction? And this for the sake of an imagination about a catholic visible church, which I dare say has served as much to the offending of the kingdom of heaven, and the injuring of its little ones, and to the ruin of the visible churches of them, as any thought that ever came in the mind of man?

On Heb. ii. 12. you complain of want of closeness in my arguing, and so put the proof again upon me. But why should I be complained of for want of proof on this head? You affirmed your visible body catholic is in this text, and you did not more. Do you imagine, that every thing that you say

ſay and I deny is truth, unleſs I prove the contrary? Is it enough for you to affirm, and muſt I prove? I referred to John xvii. 26. becauſe the text ſpeaks of the declaration of the Father's name to Chriſt's brethren, and not to the world; but you will not explain ſcripture by ſcripture, which I took to be the cloſeſt way of doing; and you ſpeak of the declaration of his name by Chriſt to his brethren, and explain it ſo as to be as much the privilege of all the world as of his brethren, to whom he ſhews the Father, "and manifeſts "himſelf ſo as he does not to the world." For here again you tell of the declaration of God's name to all the world by the apoſtles; from which, after your cuſtom, you infer, it could not be a congregation; for ſtill you make the world and your viſible church the ſame. And it ſeems you imagine, that as many as the apoſtles preached to were Chriſt's brethren. You ſay, "That Pſal. xxii. contains a prophecy of "the viſibility of the catholic church under the New Teſta-"ment, and ſo do other Old-Teſtament ſcriptures." And I am alſo of the mind that the true catholic and myſtical body of Chriſt is declared in the New Teſtament to be viſible, in every way wherein the Old-Teſtament prophecies foretold it ſhould be ſo. I have told you once and again, how far I think the New Teſtament ſays it is viſible. And till you ſhew me ſome other church in the New Teſtament beſide the myſtical body, and a congregation of its viſible members, (except the great whore, and the harlots that are come of her, and alſo "commit fornication with the kings of the "earth," alſo foretold in the Old Teſtament), I muſt look upon your underſtanding the prophecies, to ſignify a catholic viſible church of divine inſtitution, as a private interpretation; and apply the prophecies only as the author of them directs me in the New Teſtament, where he explains them.

On 1 Tim. iii. 15. which is your laſt text, you tell me, I take it for granted, that the church is the little habitation of God at Epheſus. But you ſay, 1. The church here muſt be viſible; and was not that little habitation of God, the church in Epheſus, viſible? 2. You ſay it muſt be an organiſed church, becauſe of the directions about biſhops and deacons. But was not the viſible church in Epheſus an organiſed church with biſhops and deacons? 3. You ſay, "It was not the "church of Epheſus, ſeeing the epiſtle was written to Timo-"thy an evangeliſt, who had not a fixed reſidence in any "particular church," &c. But was not the epiſtle directed to Timothy then abiding at Epheſus, by the apoſtle's intreaty

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and direction, chap. 1. ℣ 3. And are not these the very words of the Apostle to him, in chap. 3. ℣ 14 after he had been giving him directions about bishops and deacons, and in the text, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come "unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayst "know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of "God, which is the church of the living God?" What easy work would I have, if you would once learn to consider the context, and what light it affords to the understanding of the text! 4. As to what you say in the next place, as I see no argument brought against any thing I have alledged, in the place of your book to which you refer; so the argument has not appeared to me that manifests any church to be meant in this text but the mystical body represented in a particular church. 5. In the last place, you go about to vindicate yourself from something very like a contradiction, and appeal to the candid reader. Will the candid or uncandid reader have the brow to deny, that Paul called elders of the church in Ephesus, "To take heed to all the flock, over the which "the Holy Ghost made them overseers, to feed the church "of God which he purchased with his own blood?" Or can any reader deny that you said, in answer to an argument of mine, This is not the visible, but the invisible church, which can only be said to be purchased with the blood of God, and that you insisted on this at some length?

And now, when your whole arguings for your visible church depend upon this proposition, That officers cannot feed the invisible church, let the candid reader, or any other reader, tell me, what is the sense of your evasion as expressed in these words: "I held the church, in which the elders were "set, to be visible, though every thing there be not spoken "of it as visible." Will he tell me you mean these elders were set in the visible church in Ephesus, to feed the invisible catholic church? Or will he perceive that you mean that these visible officers were to feed some members of the invisible church, and, in feeding them, feed that church? Or will he perceive easily, that you mean the invisible church was represented or shewed forth in the visible church in Ephesus? I dare say he will not, in a consistency with what you have been saying in the proof of your visible catholic church, if he be at all a reader. Then let him tell me, if he easily perceive it, or even reach it by the utmost stretch of the most sublimely-metaphysical thought, what you mean by the visible church, wherein these elders were set as invisible? or what you mean by the church of Ephesus as visible, and as invi-

ſible? And this the end of your efforts to make your catholic viſible church, and not the inviſible, nor any particular viſible church, viſible to me in theſe texts. And, after all that we have been ſaying, if it be viſible to any reader, I ſhall declare him a reader ſo far beyond me in ſeeing, that I ſhall not preſume to offer any more on the ſubject to his view. You tell me, you could give ſeveral other texts, or reaſons, I know not which, beſides; and I wiſh I could hear them; but I am pretty confident I may paſs this as a flouriſh to the ignorant reader.

You ſay, you have juſtly alledged, Eph. iv. and Rom. xii. As to both which I have ſaid as much in the obſervations as ſatisfies me, that it is not in your power to prove your catholic viſible church from either or both of them; and that they both intend quite another thing. But, leſt a contradiction ſhould ariſe upon you as to Eph. iv. you tell me, "Though you own ſtill, that the apoſtles, prophets, evan-"geliſts, and paſtors, were given intentionally to feed the "myſtical and inviſible body of Chriſt; yet ſtill they were "ſet in the church as viſible, under which view of it there "is a mixture both of good and bad." But were they given intentionally to feed that which, according to you, they could not feed? Could viſible miniſters feed that church which is inviſible? What then becomes of your argument againſt their being ſet in the myſtical church? And if they were given to feed it, why may not theſe gifts be ſaid to be ſet in it for that purpoſe? As I have given you ſeveral ſcriptures, by which you may ſee they were ſet in the myſtical body of Chriſt; ſo I think I have made it appear, they were ſet in the churches or congregations of the ſaints, where I own there are good and bad, but not viſibly good and bad. And you have not yet made any other church viſible to me in the New Teſtament where they could be ſet.

Upon my inquiring, why are not the children to be reputed members of the myſtical body, if one of the parents be to be ſo reputed? you anſwer ſeveral things; as, 1. It is not our reputation of them that conſtitutes them members of that body. But if the law of Chriſt command us to reſpect them as ſuch, they are ſuch to us, and that by Chriſt's law, as I have told you before; and you have not found another catholic church whereof to repute them members, but that myſtical body of Chriſt whereinto we are baptiſed, even as we are baptiſed into Chriſt. 2. You ſay the children of profeſſing parents, whether believers or unbelievers, are to be baptiſed.

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If you mean believers or unbelievers, and so members of the mystical church or not, in the sight of God, it is true; but if you mean in the sight of men, according to the law of Christ, it is most false; for they are not professing parents, if they be not believers, and members of the mystical church in the sight of men, according to that law. I know there is a good argument for the baptism of the infant-seed of them whom the New Testament commands us to look upon as the true Israel, drawn from the circumcision of the infant-seed of the typical Israel, or Israel after the flesh, Acts ii. 38. 39. Col. ii. 11. 12.; but not in the way you draw it. For it cannot be proven, that these who are externally in the Christian church, are either externally or internally under that covenant that was made peculiarly with all Israel after the flesh; nor can it be proven, that the children of any parent under the New Testament, come into the world by virtue of such a promise as that by virtue of which the children of Abraham according to the flesh were born. 3. Then you infer, that, because baptism is catholic, therefore the partakers of it have their freedom to that whole corporation or kingdom, and have at least a right to all its external privileges. But have you manifested that baptism, the sign and seal of our ingrafting into Christ, belongs to any catholic society but the mystical body, or the true church and kingdom of heaven? Or have you made it appear, that we are baptised into any particular church, or that it of itself, without more, gives a right to the privileges of any particular church? Or have you made it your business to confute what I said on this head? Nothing like it that I can see; but you take your principle of a catholic visible organised body for granted, and that this is the body into which we are baptised; and then draw your inferences.

When I desire you may shew me where, but in your own head, all the professors of the name of Christ are united together in the unity of one ecclesiastical government?

You, 1. refer me to a part of your book that by no means shews me where; but shews your fondness that appears throughout your Review to have your tedious book more narrowly considered and diligently read, as if there were some mysteries and depths of reason and wisdom in it that we could not fathom at first view.

2. You deny that either you or any Presbyterian asserted, that the church catholic visible, is one external, stated and actual society. I must therefore think that you have not been

aſſerting and endeavouring to prove, that the catholic church viſible is one external ſociety, but that it is an internal ſociety or nothing; not that it is a ſtated ſociety, but an unſtated ſociety, or a ſociety that has not the ſtate of a ſociety; nor that it is an actual ſociety, or one actually; but you ſay, it is ſufficient, if it be one habitually. Well then, it is an habitual, but not an actual ſociety; it is habitually one, but never actually one. And till you explain this your diſtinction, as here applied, I muſt ſay, it is the moſt inconceivable ſociety, to be a viſible one, that ever I yet heard of.

3. Then you tell me, that "though we cannot actually "and at one view, ſee all the members of the catholic "church; yet this will never be a good argument they are "inviſible." But I was not inquiring about the members of the viſible church, according to your way of ſpeaking, or all the viſible members of the church, according to mine. My inquiry was, where they are united in the unity of one viſible eccleſiaſtic government? To this you anſwer, all the viſible members are viſible. I own what you ſay, that all the countries in the terraqueous globe, are no leſs viſible than our own country, even as I own that all the viſible churches in the world are no leſs viſible than that whereof I am a member; but if all theſe countries were united any where in the unity of one viſible civil government, I would not be in a great ſtrait to tell where. And I ſee the churches as little dependent on any one viſible catholic eccleſiaſtical government, as I ſee all the countries of the world depending upon one catholic civil government.

But you ſay, "I conceive you mean an univerſal idea or "genus which has no other exiſtence but in your own "brain." And ſo you proceed to propoſe ſome queſtions about this univerſal idea. This is not a proper place for diſcuſſing the queſtion, If there be any univerſal idea? and therefore without troubling myſelf or you about that, I ſhall give my anſwers to your three queſtions. And, 1. Your catholic viſible church can have no officers given to it, but in your brain; becauſe it has no exiſtence without your brain; and a political body, as you ſay, is ſomething real. 2. I likewiſe acknowledge, that it has no actual exiſtence, no being in nature without your brain, till you ſhew me where it is united but there. 3. And, for the ſame reaſon, I deny that it has members. There are viſible members of the real catholic church; there are alſo members of theſe viſible churches, in every one of which that catholic church is ſhewed forth; but

I cannot see that these are parts of a catholic church visible, till I see that they were ever or shall be united in one visible catholic government of divine institution.

Upon my refusing, that the churches scattered through Pontus, Galatia, &c. are expressly called the "flock of "God," and that the elders are conjunctly called to feed or rule that "one flock;" you tell me I ought to have replied to your question, whether this flock was one, because they assembled in one place for public worship? Or on account of their being united under one ecclesiastic government, or their having a right and inherent power so to do? but it was time enough for me to answer this question, when I owned that all the Christians in these parts are called "one flock" by themselves, as the Christians in the city of Ephesus under the oversight of the elders there, are called "the flock." So I denied the foundation of your question, and gave good reasons from the text and context for my so doing, to which you have answered nothing, but by repeating assertions of that which is to be proven, and which is plainly cross to the very text. For though it be manifest that the exhortation, 1 Pet. v. 12. 13. applies to as many companies of elders or Presbyteries as were in these parts, and as many flocks as had these elders among them, and to all the presbyteries and the flocks whereof they are overseers to the end of time; yet though the exhortation be thus far indefinite, as you speak, it is most manifest, that the exhortation is directed to a company of elders as standing related to the flock which is among them, and whereunto they are ensamples; which flock they are exhorted to feed in the full sense of that word. And there is no flock any way spoke of there, but a flock which is among them; nor are they called to oversee any flock there, but the flock which they are to oversee, not as lords, but as ensamples; nor are they exhorted to feed any flock there, but the flock which they could feed in the full sense of feeding, and where they dispensed the ordinance of the supper, as well as exercised discipline and government; nor is there the least insinuation of any flock fed with discipline and government distinct from the flock which was fed with the word and sacrament.

How then do you propose to make it appear, that all the churches in these parts were one church, and all the presbyteries were one council of elders ruling that one compounded church in matters of general concern? Though you repeat this never so oft, till you find some foundation for it in this

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or some other text, it signifies nothing. And till you prove that all these flocks or churches are called one flock, though they all had one king, Jesus Christ, and one law that is now written in the New Testament, you say nothing to your purpose. As to what you say of my begging the question about the church in Ephesus; after you have destroyed the argument taken from the large conversion there, which extended to all the little Asia, by saying the flock or church in Ephesus consisted only of these in the city, you can do nothing but beg upon the question. Every presbytery in these provinces, yea and every where else, is as expressly called to feed the flock which is among them, and oversee it as ensamples, as the presbytery of the church in Ephesus is called to feed that flock; but it is not yet proven, that any such flock consists of many flocks. I also denied that the twelve tribes are all designed *church*, James v. 14. and gave my reasons, to which you answer nothing, but criticise upon my manner of denying, and come off with a bare repetition of your poor assertion, and a reflection on me, as using mean shifts, *i. e.* arguments and exceptions, as I take it, which you will not venture to remove.

Then you lay down a scheme about the gospel-ministry, and assert, 1. The relation of Testament ministers or elders to Christ as his stewards and ambassadors; but you speak of no relation to the mystical body whereof he is the head. 2. You assert another relation under this, to Christ's universal visible body, 1 Cor. xii. and Eph. iv. But we have seen the weakness of your arguments on these texts to prove any such body of Christ, or any gift of a ministry unto it. And baptism neither respects a single congregation, nor your visible catholic body. Excommunication is out of a particular church, and if it be warrantably done, is ratified in heaven; but there is no visible catholic church yet proven, out of which any person can be excommunicated. 3. You assert, that under this there ariseth another subservient to this, and more particular relation, and that is, their relation to particular congregations, by which you say, they are denominated the elders of such and such *churches*, and not of others. And then you apply this chimerical scheme to the case in hand, by repeating your unproved assertion, That many churches are called *church*, *flock*, *assembly*, and *one lump*. And because the members and elders of one church may be occasionally received by another, and there act as members

members or elders, you infer I have not answered, but trifled about the churches of Galatia.

I am still ready to acknowledge, that it is the duty of the churches of the saints to hold that communion together, and to do every thing toward one another that is required of them, or that they have any example for in the New Testament, which is all agreeable to their having the same King and Lord, and the same law and rule of worship and government, and the same ordinances appointed for each of them unto the edification of the mystical body of Christ, whereof every member of them is a visible member, and every minister a minister: but beyond the communion of churches pointed out to me in the New Testament, I dare not follow you, nor assent to any such communion and oneness of churches as has already served to destroy their being, and to bring forth and nurse up the man of sin; and that is the thing you are contending for, without any shadow of ground for it in the New Testament. As to your saying, that I have trifled, instead of answering what you say on the churches of Galatia, I tell you again, that it is easier to speak thus, after your custom, than to be at pains to take my exceptions out of the way. And I am of the mind that I have said more on the churches of Galatia than you durst undertake to answer.

Then you proceed to your next import of the word *church*, which is the pastors and rulers of the visible body of Christ; and you satisfy yourself with saying, that I have not answered what you said on Matth. xviii. and Acts xv. 22. and Acts xviii. 22. and referring the reader to what you have said, giving him liberty to judge for himself. So that I have no more to do here but refer him also to what I have answered, if the bare reading over of these texts be not sufficient to let him see, that the word *church*, in them, cannot signify the elders, as distinguished from the flock. But you put me in mind of another scripture that you brought in the proof of this in another part of your book, and that is, Acts xiv. 27. where you say, by the *church* we must only understand the presbytery of Antioch; because it was only that presbytery that sent them forth, and not the church; and it is not easy to conceive that they should report the success of their embassy to any but those by whom they were sent.

To this I answer, That as Paul and Barnabas made the same report to many others besides these that sent them, that they made to the church in Antioch, Acts xv. 3. 12. so by the church which they gathered together, and to which they

they rehearſed all that God had done with them, I can underſtand nothing elſe but that church wherein that preſbytery was that laid hands on them, Acts xiii. 1. But by the ſame rule, by which you make the church diſtinguiſhed from the elders, Acts xv. 22. yet to ſignify the elders, you may make the church here to ſignify the preſbytery that was in it: and who would be at pains to confute ſuch aſſertions? And now, Sir, I have mentioned all the ſcriptures that you have called in to the ſupport of one of the grand foundations of Popery, namely, a church repreſentative; but let me ſay, that there needs no more but the mentioning of theſe texts, to ſhew that the notion of a church repreſentative never took its riſe from the uſe of the word *church* in the New Teſtament.

But before you leave this head, you tell me you have two things more to propoſe on Matth. xviii. For I reckon you imagine your main ſtrength lies there. And you begin with declining to ſhew a warrant in the New Teſtament for elders their binding and looſing any otherwiſe but in the preſence, and with the conſent of the flock. And, as is your cuſtom when it comes to the pinch, you complain of me for giving you a negative to prove. But after the evidence I have brought from the ſcripture account of the nature of the rule and government of Chriſtian elders, or preſidents, leaders, feeders of the flock of God which is among them, not as Lords over God's heritage, but as enſamples to the flock, and after what I have pointed out of the practice of the apoſtles and elders of the apoſtolic churches, and particularly the practice, Acts xv. 22. to which agrees the practice of the primitive churches as far down as the third century, I muſt be allowed to ſay, that the elders of a church are warranted to bind and looſe, in the preſence and with the conſent of the flock which they overſee, and that there is no warrant in the New Teſtament for their doing it otherwiſe. Yea, I may put ſuch confidence in you as to reckon, that if you had but had the leaſt ſhadow of a warrant to produce, you would have produced it, before you had betaken yourſelf to the ſhift of making it a negative, and ſo refuſing to prove it, by a rule of the art of ſcholaſtic diſputing.

The two things that you propoſe, and leave to my cooler thoughts, are, "1. Tell the *church* is meant of a church of "rulers, and conſequently it was them the text ſpeaks of, "as having the power of binding and looſing, without the "leaſt hint of the neceſſity of the conſent of private Chri-"ſtians."

" ſtians." Well, this is the thing in queſtion, and it has been in my thoughts long before now; but neither my cooleſt nor warmeſt thoughts can find any ground for it in the text. How is it proven? By two things again. " 1. If the *church* " here meant be not a church only of rulers, then there may " be a worſhipping aſſembly or organiſed church, conſiſting " of no more but two or three; for the promiſe made ℣ 20. " is unto that number, which plainly ſuppoſes there may be " a church of no more in number." But how does it ſuppoſe that? Are the two or three called the *church*, ℣ 19. 20.? Or is the church, ℣ 17. no more but the eminent two or three pointed at ℣ 19. and 20.? The church, ℣ 17. is a ſociety, whereof the treſpaſſing brother and the offended brother, to whom the Lord's diſcourſe is directed, and the one or two more, are members. And therefore the church, ℣ 17. cannot be merely the two or three ſpoke of, ℣ 19. and 20. The promiſe, ℣ 18. is made unto the church, whereof the offended brother is a member. Again, there is a promiſe particularly made to two or three of them to whom the promiſe was made ℣ 18. and theſe are the elders, or theſe that preſide in the church, or their leaders and enſamples in this matter. Theſe are not called the *church*, but *two of you*, which is the very leaſt number of which a preſbytery of a church can conſiſt; and theſe two have this promiſe as well as twenty.

Now, Sir, ſuppoſe, as our Lord ſuppoſes, there be no more elders to act in this buſineſs but two, then tell me what is intended by *you*, of whom he ſays theſe two are, if it be not the ſociety of which he had been ſpeaking in the foregoing verſes, whereof the offended brother, to whom his diſcourſe is directed from the beginning, is a member? Thus I am of opinion, that you ſhall never be able to prove, that the two or three, whom our Lord makes only a notable part of the church, are called the *church*, Matth. xviii. 17. It is to me manifeſt, that the whole church, the whole ſociety, whereof two or three are an eminent part, has ſome part to act in this matter of binding and looſing: for theſe two or three are plainly two or three of that church to which the offended brother tells the treſpaſs, ℣ 17. and of them that " bind or looſe on earth," with a promiſe of " binding " and looſing in heaven" what they " bind and looſe on the " earth," ℣ 18. The brother that tells the church whereof he is a member the treſpaſs, has plainly a part to act in this matter; and ſo has the whole brotherhood, according to

these words, "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be "to thee as an Heathen man and a publican. Verily I say "unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound "in heaven. Again, I say unto you, That if two of you "shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall "ask, it shall be done for them," *&c.*

Now, as I reckon you will not confine to elders what is said to the offended brother, lest you make this whole discourse to touch only offences and trespasses among elders; so you may see that these to whom he speaks, together with the offended brother, are more than the two or three of them. These two or three, then, are not the whole society that acts in binding and loosing, or the church; but they are those that preside among them, that guide and lead them, not as lords, but ensamples in the business of binding and loosing; and they have a special promise, as they are such a part of the binding and loosing society, or of the church; but they have no promise as separated from that society, and acting without them, or agreeing to ask, touching binding and loosing, and gathering together without them, to that purpose.

By what has been said, you may see the great weakness of your inference; if the *church* be not meant of a church only of rulers, then there may be an organised church, consisting only of two or three: and you may also perceive the falsehood of the alledgeance that supports it, *viz.* That the promise, ℣ 20. being made to that number, supposes there may be a church of no more but that number. And from what has been said, you have an easy answer to your second argument, to prove that the church, ℣ 17. means a church only of rulers: for you propose a question upon ℣ 19. which you do not cite fairly; and the question is, "Now, is the church "here meant in the preceding verse, of a congregation of Je-"sus Christ with its presbytery?" And then you tell me, "If I will not reject these words, they must stand as a de-"monstration, that "Tell the church" is meant of a church-"representative." But ℣ 19. can never shew that the church, ℣ 17. is to be understood only to mean the two, who are the smallest presbytery that can be in a church. This is not the whole church to which the promise was made, ℣ 18. but an eminent part of it, even the presidents in it: and the promise made to these two, ℣ 19. is not made to them as acting separately from their brethren, the members of the church, so as to bind and loose without them, but as acting their

proper

proper part among them, as presidents in the society where this affair is transacted. The promise supposes there are no more but two of that kind in the society of which he had been before speaking: and his words for the encouragement of the smallest presbytery or council of bishops in a church, and therefore also of the greatest, are, "If two of you shall "agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it "shall be done for them." Now these two, or as many more elders as can be in a church, are not the whole church, but two of the church: so that, in answer to your question, I can tell you that I find both congregation of Jesus Christ, *you*, and its presbytery, *two of you*, pointed at ℣ 19. And thus, this verse can never demonstrate, that *Tell the church*, ℣ 17. is meant of a church-representative, but the contrary. But indeed you say nothing for a church-representative here, till you prove that the two or three are called the *church*, separately from the society where they rule; which, for what I can see, can never be done.

From what has been said, you may also see, how groundless your bold assertion is, "There is nothing here to give "the least countenance to the consent or concurrence of a "congregation in binding or loosing." You conclude what you say on this head with something like a contradiction to yourself: for you had told in your book, p. 607. 608. That to meet in Christ's name included their concord and agreement in the thing they are to address him for; and that this is pointed out to us in what he immediately lays down, before he gives this encouraging promise to such as assemble in his name, ℣ 19. and then you apply all this that is said to two or three to twenty or thirty, p. 610. 611. 612. But now you tell, where there are a multitude of rulers, the agreement of the plurality must determine the cause, unless we should put it in the power of any one to have a negative over a whole assembly, which is absurd, and contrary to common sense.

It is true you still acknowledge, what cannot be denied, that where there are only two, as is supposed in the text, there cannot be a decision but by their agreement or joint act; and you further acknowledge, there cannot be a decision by two against one, if there be three, as is supposed in the following verse. But is it any way more absurd, and contrary to common sense, that ten should have a negative upon twenty, than one should have a negative over two? Further, if the multitude of rulers meet in Christ's name, then it is not con-

trary to your ſenſe, that is, common ſenſe, that they ſhould proceed by concord and agreement; for that is according to your ſenſe to meet and act in Chriſt's name. I am ſure this text warrants and obliges two or three elders in a church to act in binding and looſing in the way of concord and agreement; and, till you find a warrant for their doing otherwiſe when they are more in number, you will not be able to ſay, that they are regulating their actions agreeably to his word, which you own is imported in meeting in his name. But you have not aſſerted that it is contrary to ſcripture, that the greateſt number of elders ſhould always act in binding and looſing by concord, unleſs you intend to ſay, that whatever is contrary to your ſenſe, or differs from the common way of proceeding in deciſions in numerous civil courts of the rulers of the nations of the world, is contrary to the rule of the ſcripture, touching the procedure of elders in the church where they preſide. It will not be ſo eaſy for you to ſhew me the abſurdity of putting that ſame thing, and no more, in the power of any one elder over a whole great company of elders, that is put in the power of every other in that company over him and the reſt, as I think it will be to ſhew the abſurdity of putting it in the power of any one in an aſſembly of thirty elders to bind or looſe over the belly of fourteen of them.

The ſecond thing that you propoſe, and leave to my cooler thoughts, would need ſome explication, before it can come ſo low as I may have a clear thought about the ſenſe of it. As I can take it, you point ſome way to that old controverſy about the donation of the keys; and ſo you ſay that my ſenſe of Matth. xviii. ſtill goes on the ſuppoſition, that this text was an inſtitution and donation of the keys to a church of Jeſus Chriſt and its preſbytery. In oppoſition to this, you tell me, it is owned by moſt, if not all, that the text ſuppoſeth only that the keys were given to particular churches. Excuſe me, Sir, if my capacity do not reach your ſenſe or ſcope here. If the following words explain your meaning, it is not me; for I am incapable to comprehend them. They are as follows: "They were given to the a-"poſtles together, and they, being general officers, ſtanding "in fixed and ſtated relation to no particular churches, the "keys came to the miniſtry in particular churches, as parts "of the whole organiſed body; and yet at the ſame time "immediately, and not as if by commiſſion from the catho-"lic church."

Without breaking my head about this myſterious diſcourſe of

of yours, I shall take the trouble to tell you my judgment about the grant of the power of binding and loosing in discipline; for of that it is that Matth. xviii. speaks, and that is what I reckon you mean by the keys, as far as this text has a relation to them. It is my judgment, that the power of binding and loosing in discipline is not given, nor supposed in this text to be given, to the apostles as such, and as distinguished from the elders or bishops, and the brethren of the churches; and the reason of my judgment is, that, if it were so, there could be no binding or loosing after the apostles are ceased. It is also my judgment, that the power of binding and loosing is not given here, nor supposed to be given to the whole organised body, the catholic visible church, whereof all particular visible churches are parts; and this I say, because, as it is evident this is not the church spoke of Matth. xviii.; so, after what I have before said, I may be allowed to affirm, there is no such church so much as supposed in the New Testament. Further, from what is before said, you may see it is my judgment, that this text does not so much as suppose that any company of elders has power to bind and loose, but as presiding in the church to which the offended brother tells his brother's trespass, after he has neglected to hear the one or two more; neither does the text suppose, that they have any power to bind and loose in dependence on any superior court of elders, but only as depending immediately on Jesus Christ, who ratifies in heaven what is done by a church of his brethren and its presbytery on the earth in his name.

You profess dullness where an answer was expected to my critical argument against a catholic visible church, and a church-representative. And you leave me as much in the dark as before, as to the inference you make from the constitution of the Jewish church to that of the Christian. Only you say synagogues were of old time, which is no news to me; for I know they took place soon after the return from the Babylonish captivity: but this is no contradiction to what I said, far less a proof of the contrary. I have said enough before of the synagogues and the subordination that was in the Jewish church, and of the equality and inequality of rulers, and I need not here repeat. You own there was not an equality of rulers of old; and therefore this cannot remain when the rest is abolished. You say your argument is not taken from the identity of the thing, but by way of analogy. But what is the analogy between equality and inequality? You still affirm, that the government of the Jewish church was moral as to its essence;

and

and therefore it is your mind, that the Jewiſh church, as to its eſſence, was moral; but you refuſe to prove it, after your cuſtom, by making it a negative: for to ſay it is moral is to ſay it is not typical, and this is a negative. Now what this moral eſſence of the government of the Jewiſh church is, according to you, I know not, if it be not the Preſbyterian model, which yet you muſt own appeared not in the inſtitution of that church. But it ſeems when every thing elſe in the conſtitution of that church is aboliſhed, the Preſbyterian model, which was hid before as the eſſence, is now apparent as the eſſence of the Jewiſh church ſtript of all its coverings. And if this be moral, then be pleaſed only to ſatisfy me how any other model might as well have been inſtituted by Chriſt, as you yourſelf acknowledge in words that I have before cited?

I have attended upon you with ſome pains in the foregoing part of your Review, and particularly upon my third obſervation, where you labour much in the maintenance of your credit as a critic, and do your beſt in the ſupport of your catholic viſible church, and church-repreſentative, and of the arguments you had uſed for theſe; and, after all, I muſt ſay my obſervations and this obſervation are very much confirmed to me by your Review; and the weakneſs of your cauſe is ſtill more manifeſt as to the intereſt it pretends in the ſcripture, as I hope it will ſtill be further manifeſt as you write further upon it. The following part of your Review depends upon what you have been ſaying in this foregoing part; and, as you are ſhorter, therefore on the following obſervations, ſo, I think, may I be.

On the fourth obſervation, you labour more in the vindication of your own unguarded expreſſions than in the proof, the point in queſtion, or in the taking off of my exceptions, and anſwering my arguments. You ſay you have given a good reaſon towards the end of that ſection that begins, p. 108.; wherefore you could not take the theſis that I laid down in *The explication of the propoſition.* But was not that the book you was pretending all along to impugn? And now, when I had, in the Obſervations, referred you to that Explication, the theſis laid down there, and the arguments that ſupport it, why could you not take that for the theſis to be impugned by you now? And what concern have I with your arguments any further than they touch that? But as far as I could underſtand, from the whole of that ſection in your book, that your notion of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity that fits a man for being a member of a viſible church differs from

from mine, I have impugned it, and brought ſcriptural arguments againſt it; to which I ſee no anſwer, but reproach of my notions of brotherly love, and complaints of flaming ſpeeches, and flights, and ludicrous banters, and methods unbecoming the ſobriety of a Chriſtian, *&c.* But as I ſpoke the "words of truth and ſoberneſs," ſo I ſee they have affected you one of theſe two ways, that the truth uſes to affect the ſons of men. And as you have not ventured upon any other kind of anſwer to my arguments, ſo I hope you will excuſe, if I can make no further return to theſe words of yours. You propoſe one queſtion to me upon the thing in queſtion, and to that I ſhall give you a plain anſwer; and your queſtion is, "Was the church of Corinth particularly, or any other "church, mentioned in the New Teſtament, where there "were ſo many abominable principles and practices abound-"ing, all ſaints and faithful ones, or members of the myſti-"cal body in the judgment of charity?" My anſwer is, beſide what I have ſaid on this ſubject in *The explication of the propoſition*, to which I refer you, That all the members of the church in Corinth, or any other ſuch church, having come to be ſo upon the appearance of their faith, love, and hope in Chriſt Jeſus, behoved to be reckoned ſaints, and faithful in Chriſt, and members of his body myſtical, till ſuch time as the law of Chriſt, touching offenſive principles and practices, warranted and obliged the church to reckon them as Heathen men and publicans, and the church in Corinth could not lawfully keep them in her communion after that; nor was it then lawful for any Chriſtian to hold communion with them in any viſible church; for that law, if he neglect to hear the church, "Let him be unto thee as an Heathen "man and a publican," is obliging upon every ſingle member, as well as upon the whole church.

As to what you had formerly aſſerted about the members of the viſible church as ſuch not having any right from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant; after your complaint of my words, which yet were your own, and ſeveral fetches to clear yourſelf, you now advance, "That all the "churches in the New Teſtament have an expreſs law re-"quiring them to partake of the holy ſacrament of the "Lord's ſupper, and binding them at the ſame time to do it "in faith." Thus you have now acknowledged, that the members of every viſible church have a right from God to partake of that ſeal of the new covenant. But you ſpeak of a ſaving title and inward ſeal of the Spirit which can only be had

had by faith; whereas before you said the members of the visible church, as such, had not any title, and you seemed to speak of the sacraments. As to what you say of the covenant, within the bond of which all that came out of Egypt were, you will be in a better case to speak with me about it, after you have considered and attempted to answer my book on the kingdom of Christ: for I will not be always repeating what stands there unanswered touching the difference betwixt the covenant at Sinai and the new covenant.

As to a minister's preaching as a minister to none but the church whereof he is pastor, you cite the Independents; and when I say that the pastor of a church bears Christ's commission to preach the gospel to every creature, you repeat your ordinary cant about a catholic church visible, and the identity of that with all creatures under heaven, and propose a deal of questions to me upon the supposition of your own scheme about a catholic visible church, as in order of nature before particular churches, which yet sometimes you make the parts of which that whole is made up. But as I have shewed that no such catholic church appears in the New Testament, so now I give you these things for an answer to all your questions.

1. Every man that has the commission recorded, Matth. xxviii. is the minister of Christ, the head of the mystical body, and of that catholic body which is his church, and not of any catholic church visible. And there is no other catholic church but this so much as supposed to be constituted in the ministerial commission.

2. For the edifying of this catholic body, already formed by the ministry of the apostles, Christ's ministers, the ministers of his mystical body, are set in churches as pastors, elders, or bishops of these churches; and that by his laws so appointing. And as pastors of these churches, which are subservient every one of them to the mystical body, they are to preach the gospel to them that are without, or the world, to gather them men out of it into the mystical, and then labour to confirm them in it, by gathering them into a visible church after they are baptised, and teaching them there to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded.

3. As the ministerial commission was granted in the first congregational church, as I shewed in the Observations, and proceeded out of it in its execution, so the most proper way for the execution of it is by the pastors of such churches; and every other way is irregular, that is, not according to the

the rule of the word. Apollos acted regularly, when, upon his being qualified to execute that commission in a place where there was no church yet erected, he went forthwith to the church at Corinth in Achaia, and did not stay to exercise his ministry, or fulfil his commission among his disciples, according to John Baptist's ministry that were there, Acts xviii. towards the close, and chap. xix. from the beginning.

4. I do not perfectly understand what you intend by what you say about investiture, if you be not some way seeking to establish the uninterrupted succession; as to which I refer you to the author of the *Original constitution of the Christian church*, p. 616. & 617. And I am ready to maintain, that it is in the power of the disciples of Christ, at any time, or in any place of the world where they are, to assemble together, and chuse their pastors, who, if they be qualified by Jesus Christ with ability to teach and exhort, and answer the characters laid down in his law, bear his commission as truly as any pastors in the first Christian churches; yea, I will acknowledge, that every man that is qualified by Christ, and accepted by his disciples, hearing his voice, though they be not yet gathered together in a church, bears his commission; and without this, all the investiture in the world will not invest any man with that commission. And if you mean by investiture, the imposition of hands, there is no other presbytery that can do that but the presbytery of a congregational church; and they have this power as well as the power of binding and loosing, as they are independent of any superior church power, and depend immediately on Jesus Christ, the head of the catholic body mystical, who has all power in heaven and earth.

Further, it belongs properly to a congregation or church of the saints, as the society wherein the true catholic church is represented, and as instituted by Christ for holding up and spreading the light of his gospel in the world as a golden candlestick, in a subserviency to the mystical body, to set apart pastors and teachers for the edifying of that body, and when they are placed in such a church, they are a light set on a candlestick, that it may shine to all about. But as they are indeed to be pitied, who pretend to be ministers, and have no other evidence for it to their own consciences, or the consciences of others, but that hands were laid on them by a diocesan bishop, or by a classical presbytery, and thereupon, by the custom of the country, they were called ministers, and enjoyed benefices accordingly; so your questions about investiture, and the commission to preach, put

me in mind of an ancient queſtion, *Who gave thee this authority?* That has been put by the Roman church to them of the reformation, eſpecially the firſt of them; and when you anſwer me diſtinctly, who made the inveſtiture of Chriſt's commiſſion them? I think you will furniſh anſwers to your own queſtions to me. Whereas I had told you, that by your own argument againſt the Independents, you can preach only as private perſons, to the reſt of the world, that are not members of the catholic church viſible, ſeeing you do not pretend to be paſtors to more than that church. You, 1. Repeat your aſſertion, that miniſters are officers of the catholic viſible church; for which, as I have ſhewed, you have no countenance from 1 Cor xii. 28. nor from any other ſcripture. But what is this to the purpoſe? you tell me, 2. The ſame commiſſion by which the catholic church viſible is conſtitute, gives miniſters an authoritative power to preach to Heathens, in order to bring them in to the church, that they may receive the ſtated and orderly diſpenſation of ordinances, as well as it makes them the miniſters of that church when gathered.

But where is that commiſſion by which the catholic church viſible is conſtitute? This will be as hard for you to ſhew, as where that church is united in the unity of one eccleſiaſtic government? And does that commiſſion make you a paſtor to Heathens before they be brought in to that church by preaching? If not, do you preach to them as a paſtor or a private perſon? I reckon this is the pith of your mighty argument againſt the Independents. You ſay you have an authoritative power to preach to them. And ſo has every paſtor of a church of the ſaints an authoritative power, as the miniſter of Chriſt, the head of his body the true church, and the head over all things to it, to preach the goſpel to every creature; and this power he has from him that conſtituted the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, and inſtituted every church of the ſaints, to ſhew it forth, and to ſerve to the edification of it till it be perfected; but never inſtituted a catholic viſible organized church, nor appointed any officers for it.

Your proving that Eph. iv. 11. 12. is meant of the inviſible church, is ſtill inconſiſtent, as I ſaid, with your bringing that text as a proof for the miniſtry's being given to the catholic viſible church: for you cannot prove that the catholic viſible is meant there, till you manifeſt that it cannot be underſtood of the inviſible, as you do on other texts you bring

bring to this purpose. Neither do you reconcile what you say of them that are baptized, having a sealed right to all the external privileges belonging to the covenant whereof baptism is the seal, and of this continuing till it be forfeited by some deed or action of the person, either with what you said, p. 111. of your book, which you have now unsaid, or with what you say, p. 118. where you require, in the baptized, as needful to the end of their being admitted members of the visible church, that they make a serious profession of subjection to the ordinances of Christ.

You forbear to prove a supposition, which was the foundation upon which an argument of yours leaned, and excuse yourself from proving it, by denying it was your words; but take away that supposition, and then let your own judgment direct you where the strength of your argument lies. And I took very good care to touch upon the question, how the preaching of the pastors of churches of the saints, for the conviction and conversion even of hypocrites consists with their judgment of charity of every church-member; when I denied the supposition, and pointed you to your own distinction, p. 147. and to Paul's calling them to be reconciled to God, whom he yet declares to be saints. And now I further tell you, that the pastor of such a church may preach the same way to his church-members, as you may do to that part of the catholic church which you admit to the Lord's supper, supposing them to be converted already.

I must say, you have a strange medley of principles about church membership and communion. For you affirm, "that all "the churches in the New Testament have an express law re- "quiring them to partake of the Lord's supper," as was before noticed. Again you affirm, "I could be very clear to admit a "Heathen to be a member of the visible church, on his mo- "ral and seemingly serious profession of the gospel; though, at "the same time, I could not determine myself he was to "be esteemed a member of the mystical body." Then you affirm, "Thus, as the Lord's supper is not a formal mean "of conversion, but of farther growth and nourishment to "those that are already converted, so these who give no dis- "coveries of their belief in Christ, are not to be admitted to "partake of that ordinance, lest they profane the holy things "of God, and the minister be accessory thereto: but in the "admission of members to the visible church, this cannot be "said, this being the necessary and ordinarily possible mean "of conversion."

I required ſcripture proof for the ſentence of ſuſpenſion from the Lord's ſupper. In anſwer to this, 1. You deſire me to ſhew you expreſs ſcripture for my aſſerting this propoſition, *viz.* The apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem. Inſtead of ſcripture-proof, you tell me expreſs ſcripture, and for a propoſition aſſerted by me, you produce ſome part of a propoſition, which is no aſſertion. But to ſatisfy you in the way you ſatisfy me ſometimes, the author of the *Original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church* has theſe words, p. 291. "from the preſbyterial church of Jeruſalem, the apoſtles "and preſbyters." And to warrant him in this way of ſpeaking, he brings Acts xv. 6.; and I add to him for a warrant of what you call my aſſertion, which is not in all reſpects the ſame with his, Acts xv. 2. 4. 22. xvi. 2. 3. 4. Give ſuch ſcripture-proof for ſuſpenſion from the Lord's ſupper, and I'll embrace it. 2. You bring me the judgment of Independents in New England; and you ſignify I cannot refuſe their authority, unleſs I reject them as brethren, as well as the Preſbyterian divines; whereby it ſeems to me you think I ſhould reject every man as my brother, from whoſe judgment I differ in any thing. And when you ſet up human authority in this dreſs, it looks very awful; yet it does not fright me, even in this ſhape, when it ſtands in the place of ſcripture proof. You tell me of ſcriptures they cite; but it is not the ſcriptures, but their authority in their judgment upon them, that you would have to weigh with me. As to Matth. xviii. it ſpeaks not of ſuſpenſion, but excommunication; and it informs my judgment againſt ſuſpenſion. Tit. iii. 10. agrees with Matth. xviii. and ſpeaks of no cenſure but admonition and excommunication. Matth. v. 23. 24. Luke xvii. 3. 4. ſpeak not of any church-cenſure, but of private grudges and offences to be privately removed; or if they cannot be that way removed, then Matth. xviii. takes place: And ſo I remain unſatisfied about this ſuſpenſion, by means of which it is, that you hold "flagitious and lewd hearers, "and thoſe who are openly flagitious, and evidence them-"ſelves unbelievers," to be members of the viſible church.

You note down ſome texts to ſupport the diſtinction between theſe ſuſpended members, or the members whom you admit not to the Lord's ſupper, and theſe members whom you admit to that ordinance; but for brevity's ſake you have not told me how they ſupport it. The firſt is Matth. vii. 6. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither caſt ye "your pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under

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" their feet, and turn again and rent you." By this it seems to me that you hold them members of the visible church whom you will not admit to the supper, because you can call them " dogs and swine, that would trample holy things under " their feet, and turn again and rent you." And hereby it appears to me, that you would exclude the ordinance of excommunication, which is very clear in the scriptures, and set it aside altogether by this suspension: for if you keep in them whom you can call " dogs and swine," I see not whom you are to cast out. But is not church-membership a holy thing, and do not you call the members of the visible church federally holy? How then comes this holy thing, this privilege, to be given to these " dogs and swine?" And how much more do I injure them, that call them the *world*, in distinction from the *church*, and preach the gospel to them to bring them in to the church, than you, that call them " dogs and " swine," and yet members of the church, that they may hear the gospel? Your next text is, 2 Thess. iii. 6. 14. 15. of which I have given an account in my Remarks on the memorial of the synod of Angus, where I shewed that it can neither be understood of suspension nor excommunication, and to that I refer you. Your last is 1 Cor. xi. 27. to the end. But that text speaks of the evil and danger of unworthy communicating in church-members, that usually came together to eat the Lord's supper; and the remedies against this are proposed to them. " Let a man examine himself, " and so let him eat. And my brethren, when ye come to- " gether to eat, tarry one for another; and if any man hun- " ger, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto " condemnation." And is there the least shadow of suspension in all this, or any thing like some church-members laid by from the Lord's supper while the rest were partaking? Or, is not this very scripture an evidence to the contrary?

On the 5th Observation, you have plainly shifted the proof of that supposition, upon which the whole of your scheme stands; and I hope you now find where you are pinched on this head, and that your argument for a plurality of congregations or churches, in the church that was in Jerusalem, cannot be made out, without the proof of a plurality of negatives, which you will not undertake to prove; and you complain of my indiscretion in calling for the probation of them. Where you do not say that the thing to be proven is negative, there I have as little proof from you as where you complain of a negative; and you do not give answer to

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any thing of argument againſt your ſuppoſition that is to be found in this Obſervation. Only you inſinuate, that Peter's ſermon, Acts ii. was delivered by him to that multitude in different languages; and this is another prop to your ſuppoſition. You have alſo tried your critical ſkill, for my diverſion, on the word *myriads*, Luke xii. 1. But the beſt of it is, you complain of my ſhifting ſcripture-proof as to what I ſay of churches throughout Judea and Galilee, and rebuke me for diſregard to ſcripture hiſtory; and for my conviction you cite Acts viii. where you ſay the Holy Ghoſt has been expreſs as to this point. But what is the point that he is ſo expreſs upon there? Is he expreſs upon this point, That there were no churches throughout all Judea and Galilee, but that in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion? I have looked through that chapter, becauſe of your confidence, imagining that though I had read that chapter, as well as the whole book of the Acts, with ſome attention before, there might ſtill be ſomething in it to which I had not adverted. But as I ſee not a word of Galilee there, ſo except I ſhould ſay, that becauſe the church in Jeruſalem was ſcattered throughout the regions of Judea, it was impoſſible there could be other churches, beſide that in Jeruſalem, throughout Judea and Galilee, before the diſperſion, I cannot perceive how this propoſition of mine is any way diſagreeable to that part of the ſacred hiſtory. "Though churches be not mentioned "throughout Judea and Galilee till after the diſperſion; yet, "when we come to ſpeak of impoſſibilities, it will be "hard to prove it impoſſible, that there were churches "throughout Judea and Galilee before." And this is the ſample that you ſay you have of my candour among other inſtances. But leſt you beget an impreſſion on mens minds, that where you have leaſt foundation, there you are moſt confident, and bring the heavieſt charges, I humbly adviſe you to uſe leſs confidence, at leaſt till you be better acquaint with the ſcripture-hiſtory; and while you are declining proof as upon this Obſervation, be modeſt, and beware of ſupplying the place of an argument by an impotent attack upon the character of your adverſary: for this I think would tend much to your credit as an author.

After all, ſince you and I are agreed, that the church in Jeruſalem was made up only of the Chriſtians inhabiting that city, or, at moſt, the ſuburbs; and ſince you have not undertaken to deny, that the converſions in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion, extended farther amongſt the Jews that were re-

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ſorting there, the impoſſibility of the church in Jeruſalem its being one congregation remains ſtill to be made out, as before, from the multiplicity of converts, whether there were churches throughout Judea and Galilee or not before the diſperſion. And you have heſitated, and will for ever heſitate, in making it out from this topic. This being the caſe, I will eaſily compound with you about churches throughout Judea and Galilee. Be you ſilent where the ſcripture-hiſtory is ſilent; let what it ſays not be nothing to you, and I ſhall not ſo much as mention churches throughout Judea and Galilee, beſide that in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion.

On the ſixth Obſervation, you ſay nothing of the catholic church viſible, but ſlightly repeat ſome of your former aſſertions, fully conſidered already. Your anſwer to all my arguments and exceptions is to be ſought out of theſe expreſſions: "I find nothing but poor ſhifts and carpings, with long "ſtories that come not near the point in debate." Again, "And all your popular harangue comes not near the que-"ſtion." "And your ſtrong aſſertions and uncharitable "charges," and the like. This is indeed the ſhorteſt and the eaſieſt way of anſwering. But as I am not certain that it ſatisfies your own conſcience, ſo I ſhall, I hope, never write for the ſake of a reader that counts ſuch things ſatisfying anſwers. You are ſo much touched with what you call my poor ſhifts and carpings, and popular harangues, and ſtrong aſſertions, that you cannot forbear attacking my character, though you ſeem to have been very ſcarce of furniture for it from what I ſaid on this ſubject; as appears from your charge, and the ground of it. Your words are: "You fur-"ther add, in the exceſs of your modeſty, that you know "no viſible union of this body, —— except you could make "one viſible paſtor and biſhop, *&c.*" But how does that exceſs of my modeſty appear in this? It appears, by your remark, in theſe words, "That viſible biſhop, you inſinuate, "has all along been againſt general councils, as I could e-"vince in ſeveral inſtances, were it needful; and all we "plead for is none of his favourite principles." You treat your reader pretty oddly here, when you found this your remark on the cutting off of a conſiderable part of that ſentence by an *&c.* on which you make this remark: for where you have the *&c.* my words are, "Or unanimous college of "biſhops over all the paſtors and congregations in the world, "and one viſible place of worſhip for the whole body to re-"ſort unto."

Now,

Now, Sir, if I had made such a concealment, and built upon it as you do here, what would not have been said upon it by you, that make such a noise and a clamour, merely upon my not noting down the pages where the words or opinions are found that I remark upon? Certainly, Sir, you that show such an uncommon zeal for candour, in laying an adversary's mind and words before the world, and rebuke me so sharply for the least shadow of the contrary appearing to yourself, and I believe to no other, should show me a good example, as to this piece of reformation in the practice of writers, lest you bring that to my mind, "But do not ac- "cording to their works."

On Matth. xviii. you incline to make short work. You have nothing but what has been considered before, except a complaint of concealing pages, to make up the want of something better to say, and references to the Independents. And you take off my exceptions, and answer all my arguings on Matth. xviii. by such answers as this. "Thus my rea- "soning is owned to be good, even by the Independents, as "to the subordination of courts; and I find nothing you "have advanced against it, save in assertions, without any "suitable proof. As for your impertinent questions and "wranglings instead of answers, from p. 78. to p. 83. as "they do not touch the strength of my argument, so they "are signs of a desperate cause: And the very foundation of "your cavils and quibbles on Matth. xviii. hath been more "than once spoken to in this missive."

And this short way of answering, as it admits of no reply, so it is very agreeable to what you say of your hope, never to engage with such an one as you represent me to be, if you were once at the end of this missive, which it seems you are in haste to be at the end of. You touch a little at what I said about women their expressing their consent or dissent in deeds of discipline. I had left you to choice in this matter, according to your sense of 1 Cor. xiv. And now I find, because they cannot act these parts in the discipline that are a degree of teaching, you are of the mind, that the teachers may proceed without their consent any way signified, to bind and loose, and that they ought not to express their consent or dissent. Then, instead of answering what I said to you, cutting off a great part of it by an &c. you answer some woman's tale, as it is reported by your worthy friend Edwards; and then you tell me, you are wearied with such trifling and stories instead of answers. But these are only reflections on

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my arguments and manner of writing. My impertinent queſtions, &c. trouble you ſo on this part of the Obſervation, that it could not paſs without another reflection on myſelf. I was before a man with many very ſilly and very ill things about me; but now it is a queſtion if I be a rational creature capable of religion; and I am metamorphoſed into ſomething very like a brute: for I am "one that has caſt off "reaſon as a mean of judging of things ſacred." And with that one you are never to engage after you have got to the end of your miſſive. But, for this good reaſon, you might have ſaved yourſelf the trouble of this miſſive; while yet, on the other hand, it muſt be owned, that when I have caſt off my own reaſon, I am ſtill the fitter to be ſerved with your's in the place of it. And if you be to write againſt none but ſuch adverſaries as will not reject your reaſonings and inferences from ſcripture, that to you are good ſound reaſon, but admit them all peaceably; then I think it will be ſuperfluous for you to write more, though it ſhould be never ſo eaſy.

On Acts xv. I expected at leaſt you would make ſome exceptions to my plain ſcripture-arguments, ſerving to overthrow the two great ſuppoſitions on which all your inferences were built, and to eſtabliſh the congregational order, as clearly founded in that chapter. Inſtead of this, you tell me, "You find a long diſcourſe made up of *ifs* and *buts*; "and then, after you have told things in that comical dreſs, "you deſire me to draw my concluſion from what you have "ſaid." And then you complain of this as a way unſuitable to a diſputant. But you ſay I have not attempted to give any anſwer to your arguments, more than by antiſcriptural aſſertions. And you offer to make this appear from an aſſertion of mine, that you affirm is not clearly founded in ſcripture; and the aſſertion is this, as you repeat it, "That it is "very clear that Paul and Barnabas were not members of "the ſynod at Jeruſalem, from Acts xv. 22." But my aſſertion ſtood in theſe words. "Now, that Paul and Barna"bas were not members of the court that came together to "decide this queſtion, and that they were not of that com"pany that ordained the decrees, is to me very clear from "theſe words, ℣ 22. 'Then it pleaſed the apoſtles and el'ders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen men of their 'own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, Judas, 'ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, 'and wrote letters by them."

After you have set down this assertion, and the ground of it, in your own way, you address me thus: "But where does "this clearness appear? Is it because Paul and Barnabas are "mentioned as the persons with whom Judas and Silas were "to go down to Antioch? This is all I can find." But would you indeed have me to believe, that this is all you can find, or that this is indeed the thing you find, Obs. p. 86. 87. 88. to make the assertion clear? As I am clear, this that you say was not to be found, but another thing; so, if you had set down my assertion in my own words, with the words of the text from which I said I was clear to deny, that Paul and Barnabas were of that company that ordained the decrees, your reader would easily have perceived what was the ground of my clearness. But you did not, it seems, think this so fit. And when you are shewing the insufficiency of the ground you would have me to go upon, and coming over the text, why do you shun so much as mention these words of the text, "Of their own company with?" Well, Sir, this was indeed the easiest way, to put another argument in place of mine, and other words in place of the words of the Holy Ghost, or conceal his words and my argument, and then seek the credit of an answerer from such a reader as would be imposed on, by answering to another thing that needed no answer; but the easiest way is not always the safest and surest, nor will it always be found the way to true honour.

To ease yourself of the distress that this, which you call my assertion, puts you in, you say, "You are persuaded I "am among the first that ever held this assertion." It seems then this is one of my distinguishing singularities, which you are bound to confute, as not being confuted in the book to which you refer in your postscript. But it seems, by what you say, that I am not altogether the first; and, if I have Luke before me, it is enough. Then you tell your reader very confidently, hoping, no doubt, he will be so good as to believe you, let Acts xv. insinuate or say what it will to the contrary, "But we have nothing but your word for it, which you "force us to believe is not canonical." Far be it that my word should be canonical; but I am clear we have the word of the author of the book of the Acts for it, and I believe his word is canonical. And it looks like as if you would have your word to be canonical with all them from whom you would hide his word, and to whom you give your own in the place of it.

Next, you think you have found me in a contradiction to myself,

myſelf, a real one; whereas your inconſiſtencies are only imaginary. And no doubt you reckon, that many imaginary inconſiſtencies will be abundantly counterbalanced by a real one. I did not apprehend that the queſtion betwixt you and me was, which of us is infallible? or, which of our words be canonical? for I thought we were both liable to real inconſiſtencies. But if this be the very queſtion, I ſhall freely yield my ſide of it, and ſo you may chuſe you ſome other rival than one that has no pretenſions to what you are contending about. But if I had no evidence againſt your infallibility, and your words being canonical, ſave what you ſay about this inconſiſtency, I would be certain that you are fallible, and that your word is not canonical. You ſay, "Now, I deſire you may diſcover to your admirers, which "of theſe aſſertions are trueſt, *viz* the decrees were ordained "by the apoſtles, *&c.* before the queſtion and diſpute "was raiſed at Antioch; or, whether it behoved the news "of that diſpute to be notified to the apoſtles and elders, *&c.* "by Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from An"tioch, before any decrees about it could be enacted? Sir, "you have a dexterity in raiſing imaginary inconſiſtencies, "and I expect you will ſhew an equal ſkill in reconciling a "real one." But may I not inquire at my hater, if he be indeed perſuaded that the firſt of theſe aſſertions is mine? Or if this be what I am aſſerting in the words you yourſelf had cited immediately before your queſtion? "In your ſpeech "before the commiſſion," p. 9. "you ſay, Theſe decrees "were ordained by the apoſtles and theſe elders, with the "brethren that were in Jeruſalem, before the queſtion and "diſpute was raiſed at Antioch, even that company that ſays, "℣ 23. 24."

Whatever be amiſſing in the pointing; yet it is moſt evident, that, in theſe words, I am aſſerting the quite contrary of what you call my aſſertion, and giving the reaſon of it. And my aſſertion is the very ſame with this. The apoſtles and theſe elders, with the brethren, by whom the decrees were ordained, were in Jeruſalem before the queſtion and diſpute was raiſed at Antioch. This was my aſſertion, and the ground of it is pointed out in the words immediately following the aſſertion, "Even that company that ſays," ℣ 23. 24. "Foraſmuch as we have heard, that certain which "went out from us have troubled you with words.—to whom "we gave no ſuch commandment." This is what they ſay, and it ſupports my aſſertion. But you, by concealing what

they say, and taking away the main thing in my proposition by an *&c.* would have me to be asserting, that the question and dispute issued in the decrees before it was raised. And this was easier than to answer that argument in my speech, proving, that the decrees were not ordained by elders gathered into a synod for that purpose out of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, or any other elders, but by the apostles residing in Jerusalem, and the elders of the church there, with the brethren of that church. And so I think I may give you back Augustine's saying, "Restore me my words, and your "dreaming imaginations," not only of an inconsistency in my assertions, but also of a synod in Acts xv. "will vanish."

You come next to my speech before the commission to consider it. And you first oppose yourself to that assertion, That the decrees about the keeping of Moses's law were ordained by the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem. I said several things, and adduced several scriptures to vouch this assertion, and that was one of them of which I have been presently speaking: but as it would not answer your purpose to touch it, and give it an answer in its proper place; so indeed you have not answered, nor touched any thing I say, or any scripture I bring to prove it in the speech, but Acts xvi. 4. which I had connected with Acts xv. 22.; and you say that text is no proof of it, but declares the contrary in express words. "For," say you, "instead of saying the apostles and "elders of the church in Jerusalem, it says, The apostles "and elders which were at Jerusalem." Here is our famous criticism upon *at* and *of*, upon which you form a syllogism, whereby you disprove my assertion; and this, with a reference to the Independents and their authority, is all the answer I have to that part of my speech. Only you say, "I desire "you may let me see any scripture in the New Testament that "will vouch this assertion, either expressly or by lawful con-"sequence."

Because I know by this time you will reckon no consequence lawful that tends toward the congregational way, I shall only lay before you the texts themselves, from which I think I have this assertion; and let it not offend you, that I leave them with your conscience to draw what conclusion from them you can best answer for, but not to men. Acts xv. 2. "They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and cer-"tain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apo-"stles and elders about this question." ℣ 4. "And when "they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the

"church,

" church, and of the apoſtles and elders." ℣ 6. " And the " apoſtles and elders came together for to conſider of this mat- " ter." ℣ 22. " Then pleaſed it the apoſtles and elders, " with the whole church, to ſend choſen men of their own " company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas; namely, " Judas ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief men among the " brethren." ℣ 23. " And wrote letters by them after this " manner, The apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, ſend " greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in " Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia." ℣ 24. " Foraſmuch " as we have heard, that certain which went out from us " have troubled you with words;——to whom we gave no " ſuch commandment." Acts xvi. 1. 2. 3. 4. " Then came " he to Derbe and Lyſtra, and behold, a certain diſciple was " there named Timotheus:——which was well reported of " by the brethren that were at Lyſtra and Iconium.——Him " would Paul have to go forth with him.——And as they " went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees " for to keep, that were ordained of the apoſtles and elders " that were at Jeruſalem." Acts xxi. 18. 20. 25. " And the " day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all " the elders were preſent.——And"——they——" ſaid unto " him.——As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have " written and concluded," *&c.* Conſider this impartially, and in the fear of the author, together with what I have told you touching your criticiſm on the word *brethren*, and ſee if there be ground for the confidence you expreſs in your demand.

But againſt all this, and all I ſay in the juſtification of this aſſertion in my ſpeech, your criticiſm upon *at* and *of*, abundantly expoſed already, furniſhes you with this ſyllogiſm; which, no doubt, is, according to you, a demonſtration. " The decrees were ordained" by the company " of the " apoſtles and elders which were at Jeruſalem," Acts xvi. 4. " But Paul and Barnabas were apoſtles, and at Jeruſalem " when the decrees were enacted: therefore Paul and Bar- " nabas were of the company who enacted the decrees." It does not become me to meddle with the form of this ſolemn ſyllogiſm, when, perhaps, it has gone to St Andrew's, and got an *imprimatur* from ſome body that has better ſkill in the affair of ſyllogiſms than I can pretend to; though I am far from thinking, that it obtained it by the plurality of the voices of the maſters of philoſophy there. But I may venture to try if I can form one after the model of it, and ſo give you

you another of the same. And here it is: The decrees were ordained by the company of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, to which Paul and Barnabas were sent up, and from which they are distinguished in the enacting of the decrees, Acts xv. 2. 22. Acts xvi. 4.; but Paul and Barnabas were both in some sense apostles, and at Jerusalem when that company enacted the decrees; *ergo*, Paul and Barnabas were of the company which enacted the decrees.

Then, after you have asserted, upon what grounds you know best, that the words of ℣ 22. discover, that Paul and Barnabas gave their suffrage, and that ℣ 12. clearly intimates they gave their judgment; while yet it intimates nothing but that they narrated matters of fact relating to the question they came to propose to the apostles and elders, you proceed to take some notice of that part of my speech to which I referred you, that you might see that no consequence can be drawn from Acts xv. for the jurisdiction of one church over another; and so you touch at the reasons condescended on in that speech, why the question was sent to the church in Jerusalem, and determined there.

The first of these is, "The false teachers used the authority of the apostles and elders of this church from whence "they came out against Paul and Barnabas, ℣ 1. 2. 24. 25. "26.; and it was the use of such teachers after this to call "the apostleship of Paul in question, and represent him "unto the churches where they came as differing from the "apostles." Here are two things to be considered as the reasons of sending the question to the apostles and elders which were in Jerusalem.

1. That it was a part of the question, Whether Paul and Barnabas, in the exercise of their ministry among the Gentiles, and in their opposition to the teachers that came from the apostles and elders to Antioch, were acting contrary to the apostles and elders which were in Jerusalem, and opposing them: and this could not be determined but by these apostles and elders. This is manifest from the epistle of these apostles and elders, wherein they declare that these teachers had no instruction from them to teach what they taught, and condemn their doctrine, and testify their love and regard to Paul and Barnabas and their ministry; and, lest Paul and Barnabas should be suspected at Antioch of making a false report in their own favour, they write, and send Judas and Silas along with them to testify the same things that they wrote. You do not meddle with this.

But

But there is a second thing to be considered here, and that is, that these teachers came out from the apostles and the elders of the church in Jerusalem, and being received by the church in Antioch as coming from them, troubled them with the doctrine that they pretended to bring from them. This is likewise manifest in the epistle, where it is given as one of the reasons why the apostles and elders, to whom Paul and Barnabas were sent up to Jerusalem, and who received them when they came to Jerusalem, came together, and decided the question; for they say, "Forasmuchas we have heard, "that certain which went out from us have troubled you "with words.——It seemed good unto us, being assembled "with one accord."

Against this you offer something: for you say, "But does "the text say, that these false teachers came to Antioch "from the church of Jerusalem? Nay, does it not expressly "declare they came down from Judea, ℣ 1.?" Then, because you would have us think, that these two could not consist together, by the same rule by which you would say, if a man came from Holland, he came not from Amsterdam; or if a man came down from England, he came not from London, but from every town of England: You tell me, "Now, "according to your own argument, *the certain which went* "*out from us*, ℣ 23. 24. must imply, that the elders of the "church of Judea were there, seeing these false teachers "that came from thence, are said to *come out from us*. If "they came from Judea, then the persons from whom they "came, there mentioned, must be the elders of these "churches, no less than that of Jerusalem, which was but "one of them." Here you put me mind of their way of arguing upon Ignatius's epistles, who would have all Syria to be his diocese, or all the churches in Syria, that one church whereof he was pastor; and the same answer you can make to them, will serve yourself.

But, 1. Does it appear to you that the church in Antioch in Syria knew that the elders of all the churches in Judea were in Jerusalem, when they thought of sending Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to the elders? Or were the elders of all the churches of Judea in Jerusalem ready to receive Paul and Barnabas when they came there, and not they only, but that church of Judea, whereof they were elders, as you speak, Acts xv. 4.?

2. How do you make out this inference, if they came from Judea, then the persons from whom they came, there mentioned,

mentioned, must be the elders of these churches, no less than that of Jerusalem, which was but one of them? Could they not come from Judea to Antioch, without coming out of every church in Judea, or did they not come from Judea to Antioch in coming from one church in Judea, and from the elders of that one of the churches in Judea?

3. But what authority had the elders of all the churches in Judea, or of the church of Judea, as you call it, over the churches in Syria and Cilicia, and over all the churches of the Gentiles? What authority has the church of Holland and its elders over the church of Scotland, according to your own principles? Or how could the church of Syria send up a question to be decided by the elders of the church of Judea? Thus, when your synod is turned to the elders of the church of Judea, it brings you in to the dependency of churches upon one another.

You say further, "And what is more, there is not the "least innuendo, ver. 4. that the elders spoke of, were only "these of Jerusalem, any more than that the apostles were "only the apostles of that church, which is absurd." But there is the greatest innuendo, ℣ 2. & 4. that these apostles were residing in Jerusalem in the church there; ℣ 33. and that, as you own elders are related to the particular church whereof they are overseers, so these elders were the elders of that same church that received Paul and Barnabas, when they were come to Jerusalem. ℣ 2. "They determined that "Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go "up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this que-"stion." ℣ 4. "And when they were come to Jerusalem, "they were received of the church and of the apostles and "elders." Thus, as the apostles that ordained the decrees are distinguished from Paul an Apostle, by their residence in Jerusalem, so the elders are distinguished from all other elders by their being in that church which received Paul and Barnabas when they came to Jerusalem, that is, the church in Jerusalem. Next, you tell me, "Nor is there the least "insinuation, that the church mentioned in that verse, came "together with the apostles and elders, but the contra-"ry, ℣ 6." But does ℣ 6. insinuate, that these elders came together, without the church whereof they were presidents, to determine that question? or can it insinuate a contradiction to ℣ 22. 23. and 12.; from which it is evident, that, as ℣ 6. says they came together, so they came together in the church. And so much for the first reason, and what you have said upon it: for you have not pretended to show, that,

notwithstanding

notwithstanding this reason, an inference may be drawn from what I say on Acts xv. for the jurisdiction of one church over another.

The second reason in my speech for the sending up of this question to the church in Jerusalem, and the deciding of it there, was, " the word of God came out (1 Cor. xiv. 36.) " from this church to Antioch, and to all the world, and " from hence they had their church-order, and all the ordi- " nances of Christ, Acts xi. For this was peculiar to Jeru- " salem, that there the gospel should have a beginning." You cite the page here; but you ease your reader of the trouble of looking to it, by seeming to set down the words, and take care to conceal a considerable part of them, and so speak against what you are pleased to set down. So you say, " But, 1. Was it the worshipping assembly of Jerusalem, " pastors and people, that planted the church at Antioch? " This wants proof." All that I was here affirming wants no proof, as long as Acts xi. remains; namely that the word of God came out from the church in Jerusalem to Antioch, and that from hence they had their church-order, and all the ordinances of Christ. Neither shall it want proof, that the church in Jerusalem, the first church, where our Lord left his apostles when he ascended, had this pre-eminence above all other churches unto which the word came, that the word of God came first out from it; and that other churches had their order, and the ordinances of Christ from that church, as long as the prophecies, explained by our Lord to that purpose, and his commandment to his apostles before he left the earth, and the book of the Acts, remain.

It was prophesied, Is. ii. 1.—4. and Micah iv. 1, 2, 3. " And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the moun- " tain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of " the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all " nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and " say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the " Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach " us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out " of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord " from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, " and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their " swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning- " hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nei- " ther shall they learn war any more." From this prophesy it appears, that from Jerusalem the word of the Lord and

his law concerning the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles in one body, which is spoke of Eph. ii. should go forth among the nations, and that this peace should be the fruit of its going forth from thence, and of their receiving it from thence. Here was a question raised at Antioch, by them that pretended to bring the law of the Lord from Jerusalem to the Gentiles, and this question touched this peace very near. And where should they go for the decision of it, but to Jerusalem, from whence it behoved that law to proceed? And when the law on that point, or that part of the law of the Lord came from thence, was not this peace the effect of it? That it behoved the word and law of the Lord to go forth from Jerusalem is evident from our Lord's explication of this prophecy, and such like prophecies in the assembly of his apostles, and them that were with them, *i. e.* the hundred and twenty, the first church, Luke xxiv. 33. 36. 46. 47. "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached "in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," 48. 49. "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be "endued with power from on high."

Hereby it is evident, that the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ, was, according to his explication of the prophecies, and his appointment, to have its beginning at Jerusalem, and to proceed out of that society wherewith the Lord himself assembled, and from which he was taken up, even the apostles and them that were with them, Luke xxiv. or the hundred and twenty, Acts i. even that society on which the Holy Ghost was first poured down, Acts ii. and to which Peter speaks, Acts xv. 7. 8. 9. compare Acts ii. Acts xi. 15. Now here was a question raised by the teachers that came down from Jerusalem, concerning repentance and remission of sins, ordained to be preached among all nations in the name of Christ: for these teachers pretended to bring this from Jerusalem, as a necessary part of the doctrine of the repentance, that the Gentiles should turn to Moses's law, and that there was no remission of sins for them in the name of Jesus without that. And when the believing Gentiles were troubled with this question, Whether this was a part of the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins to be preached to the Gentiles in Christ's name, beginning at Jerusalem? where were they to seek the decision of it but there, where it was the Lord's will, that the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins in his name should begin, and from thence go forth unto all nations? And what society should determine

termine this question, but that society wherein he gave orders about it, and from which he would have that doctrine to proceed, and go forth to the nations?

That this was peculiar to the church in Jerusalem is manifest, in that there is no other church from which our Lord appointed the law, in the first revelation of it, to come out unto all the world; so that unto every other church but that in Jerusalem, the same question may be put that the Apostle puts to the church in Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. 36. What? came the word of God out from you? But the church that was in Jerusalem had not this pre eminence, after the law of the Lord to the Gentiles had gone fully forth from it, and after the apostles, by whom the Lord appointed the revelation of his law to be made, had left that church; which seems to have been the case when the epistle to the Hebrews was written, wherein the revelation of the Lord's will to the Jews, with respect to the law of Moses, calling them wholly off from it, is most clear and full. Now it will be every way as difficult for you to draw an inference, shewing the dependence of one church upon another, from the subjection of the first Christians in all nations, unto the church in Jerusalem at that time, in that which was peculiar to that church; as, you will own, it is not easy to infer the subjection of elders to superior officers, after the New-Testament revelation is completed, from the subjection of the elders of the first churches to the apostles, prophets, and evangelists. But you tell me, 2. "What is the inference from "thence? Does it thence follow, that Antioch was not a "free church, but subject to the determinations of the el- "ders and people in Jerusalem? If the church of Antioch "and its presbytery was subject to no jurisdiction under hea- "ven in its discipline, then, contrary to your own principle, "one Independent was subject to another."

You may see, by what I have been saying in the explication of this part of my speech, that the consequence of it is, that no inference can be drawn from the sending of this question to the church in Jerusalem at that time, and its being decided there, to shew the jurisdiction of one church over another; and it was your business to shew, that, notwithstanding what was said in my speech, the inference, shewing the subjection of one church to another, was good. But how you come to speak of jurisdiction in discipline here, I cannot understand: for you cannot say, that there was any discipline exercised upon the church in Antioch or its members, by them that sent the epistle to Antioch, unless you also affirm, that in all

the epiſtles that the apoſtles wrote to the churches, they, and theſe that were with them, in writing theſe epiſtles, were exerciſing diſcipline upon them. No doubt, the Chriſtian law is the rule of diſcipline: and there is that ſame juriſdiction, in the epiſtle that was ſent to Antioch from Jeruſalem, as there is in all the other parts of the New-Teſtament revelation, or in the Chriſtian law, whereof this is a very conſiderable part. But how you come to imagine, that the elders and people of the church in Jeruſalem could make this part of the New-Teſtament revelation, or at firſt give forth this part of the law of Chriſt to the Gentiles, without the apoſtles, I cannot underſtand.

3. I ſaid in my ſpeech, "The apoſtles were in this church, "and with the elders of this church, where they began their "miniſtry, and ſettled all matters of importance: and this "was an important point to be fixed in this church, while "they were in it: therefore we ſee the church at Antioch "had a ſpecial eye to the apoſtles their being in the preſbytery of Jeruſalem, when they ſent up this queſtion to be "determined there, ℣ 2."

Againſt this you ſay, 1. "It muſt be proven, that the "apoſtles in this matter acted by an extraordinary and im"mediate influence, as in the penning of the ſcripture. The "contrary of this I made appear; but it is overlooked by "you."

But, 1. The contrary will never appear from the diſcourſes of Peter and James, upon this queſtion in the church in Jeruſalem, in which diſcourſes they infer one truth from another, and explain Old-Teſtament propheſies in like manner as is done in all the New-Teſtament epiſtles to the churches, unleſs you will make it good that theſe epiſtles were not written under an infallible influence. Nor will it appear from the apoſtles their agreeing in the writing of this epiſtle, unleſs you prove, that when a ſingle apoſtle wrote an epiſtle, he was under an extraordinary and immediate influence, but when a company of them agreed, then they were only under an ordinary influence. Nor will it appear, from their taking the concurrence of that church, and its preſidents, where they at firſt received their commiſſion, and from whence it behoved the law of Chriſt, and this remarkable part of it, to go forth to the Gentiles. And you may as well ſay, that when the epiſtle to the Galatians is written in the name of all the brethren that were with Paul, in the writing of it he was not under an extraordinary and immediate influence, as an apoſtle, in that epiſtle. I muſt ſay, that after all I have heard

heard brought to ſhew, that the apoſtles were not here under an extraordinary and immediate influence, it appears to me, from the whole, that this very remarkable part of the New-Teſtament revelation, and about which the firſt Chriſtians had the greateſt difficulty, was given forth by the inſpired apoſtles with the greateſt ſolemnity, from that church from which the law of Chriſt was to go forth to the Gentiles.

2. As the apoſtles are diſtinguiſhed from the elders or preſidents of the church in Jeruſalem, in the commiſſion from Antioch, and likewiſe expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from them in the deciſion of the queſtion, and in the epiſtle; let me inquire, if the apoſtles did not act in that matter in the capacity of apoſtles, as diſtinguiſhed from elders, even as the elders acted in the capacity of elders, as diſtinguiſhed from apoſtles and brethren? And if they did ſo, then did not the apoſtles act under an extraordinary and immediate influence? Thus when I read of the apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, acting in this matter, I muſt underſtand, that every one of theſe did the part that was proper to them. The apoſtles brought forth, and infallibly declared the mind and will of the Lord Chriſt on this ſubject, in an agreeableneſs to the former parts of the New-Teſtament revelation, already made by them, and in an agreeableneſs to the propheſies of the Old Teſtament, which they infallibly explained, under the immediate influence of the ſame Spirit that indited them, and in oppoſition to the Judaiſers. The preſidents of the church in Jeruſalem went before the brethren, as enſamples of ſubjection unto the revelation of the mind and will of the Lord by the apoſtles, and were their leaders in this matter: And the brethren obeyed and ſubmitted themſelves to their preſidents and guides, who agreed in judging according to the mind and will of Chriſt brought forth by the apoſtles; and this they did in conſenting to the judgment of the elders, according to the revelation made by the apoſtles. Thus when the whole company was made of one accord, every member acting his proper part, the deed was done, and the epiſtle was written, in name of the whole.

3. And would you have me to believe, that we Gentiles have no more, in that ſolemn paſſage touching the yoke of Moſes's law, for our liberty from that yoke, but the canon of an ordinary council, ſuch as may be held to the end of the world? By no means; while it is ſo manifeſt, this thing ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, in his coming at firſt upon the uncircumciſed Gentiles, as the higheſt evidence they could

could receive of their being the peculiar people of God, without the law of Moſes, and in the Old-Teſtament propheſies, of which he is author, and which are not of any private interpretation, but muſt be explained by men inſpired by him; and ſeemed good to the apoſtles, by whom the New-Teſtament revelation was made, and this part of it under his infallible conduct; and ſeemed good to the church in Jeruſalem, from whence it behoved this part of the New-Teſtament revelation eſpecially to go forth to the Gentiles. And while it goes forth from this church, we have in it a copy caſt to all the churches for their method of procedure in their affairs, and manner of judging, in any matter wherein they are called to judge; but no pattern for the ſubjection of one church to another; as is manifeſt from what is above ſaid.

You tell me, 2. "Will the apoſtles their being in this "church make any man infer, that the church of Antioch, "in which there were apoſtles alſo, was ſubject unto the "church of Jeruſalem?" As to Paul the Apoſtle his being in the church at Antioch when this queſtion was raiſed there, if you had conſidered the firſt reaſon I gave in my ſpeech for the ſending up of the queſtion to Jeruſalem, and what I have ſaid there on that point, you might have ſaved that clauſe in your query, about apoſtles at Antioch; and I need not here add any thing to what I have above ſaid in the explication of that reaſon. And as to the ſubjection of the church of Antioch to Jeruſalem, I need not repeat what I have been ſaying clearly enough already. Yea, I do not infer from Col. iv. 16. that the church of the Laodiceans was ſubject to the church of the Coloſſians, nor that the church in Coloſs was ſubject to the church in Laodicea. But was I inferring the ſubjection of the churches to one another, from theſe things in my ſpeech, or was I ſhewing the contrary? And was it not your buſineſs to ſhew, that, notwithſtanding theſe things, the ſubjection of churches to one another might be inferred from my ſenſe of Acts xv.? When you could not do this, as good ſay nothing, as nothing to the purpoſe.

Then you tell me you are wearied with ſuch trifling, and you are reſolved to be no more with it; and then you are pleaſed to ſignify, in your own way, what kind of writing mine will be, after you have given over, and warn me of the danger of it. Truly, Sir, the controverſy wherein you have boldly engaged is laborious; and now you may ſee it will weary you before you get near the end of it. The cauſe you are oppoſing is a burdenſome cauſe, and you do well for yourſelf

yourſelf to let it alone before you proceed further in it. But, notwithſtanding your big words, you appear here like a man throwing down his arms, and begging quarter; only, as the proverb is, "You will not loſe your manly look." Yet compaſſion is due to you; but there is no ſmall danger in giving quarter to your cauſe. You warn me of danger in the event: but I know no everlaſting danger in cleaving to the word of God, and it can comfort in all temporal affliction. And the only danger that is any way in your power to bring me in, is that which has attended diſputers for the truth in all ages, when their adverſaries would diſpute no more with them; and with this danger I am bound to lay my account. Only I think I can declare this for your ſatisfaction, that, till I ſee ſomething of more weight than I have ſeen in your writings, or in any other writings againſt the principles for which I contend, and ſomething new advanced by you or any other, that may give occaſion to explain them further, it will be altogether ſuperfluous for me to write further on the ſubject. And therefore, except you ſay ſomething to the purpoſe from the word of God, beyond what you have ſaid, expect no more of my writings to you upon the diſpute.

Before you part with me, you offer ſome exceptions againſt the ſcriptural evidence I brought for the conſent of the people to the ſentences or deciſions of elders. As to Acts xv. 22. you do not meddle with it, nor except againſt the clear evidence I brought from thence, further than to tell me, that I muſt once anſwer what you have ſaid about the whole church, before I take it for the private Chriſtians or worſhipping aſſembly; and till then, Cyprian's ſentiment is of no weight with you. But I have overthrown all that you ſaid about the whole church, and demonſtrated, from the text and context, that the *whole church* muſt be taken for the worſhipping aſſembly in Jeruſalem, and for no other ſociety. Only I do not remember that I adverted to this aſſertion in your book, Original conſtitution, p. 389. "Before the apoſtles left and finally departed from Jeruſalem, "we find that they, and the elders of that church, aſſembled "together in a judicative capacity, with the commiſſioners "from Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, and very probably from "the churches of Aſia, and in one body enacted ſeveral de"crees, for the good and welfare of the ſeveral churches "concerned therein." I ſhall not demand expreſs ſcriptures for your aſſerting this propoſition, *viz.* the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem: nor ſhall I trouble you to reconcile

reconcile the firſt part of this your aſſertion with your criticiſm on Acts xvi. 4. and your ſyllogiſm. But I obſerve that, by the *whole church*, you here underſtand the commiſſioners from Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; and ſo Paul and Barnabas, and certain others that came with them from Antioch in Syria, are a part of your *whole church*, there diſtinguiſhed from the apoſtles and elders. And, as I have ſufficiently demonſtrated already, that no commiſſioners from theſe parts can be underſtood by the *whole church*, Acts xv. 22. ſo you muſt excuſe me, that I did not labour in the confutation of that part of your aſſertion, That apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem very probably aſſembled in a judicative capacity with the commiſſioners from the churches of Aſia; becauſe I did not dream of any commiſſioners coming from theſe churches that the ſcripture calls the *churches of Aſia*, before theſe churches had any being.

Although you do not pretend to confute what I have ſaid on Acts xv. 22. for the conſent of the people; yet you take notice of ſome ſcriptures I noted down as agreeing thereto, and offer ſome exceptions.

And, 1. as to Acts i. and vi. you tell me, "Conſider, and "give a plain anſwer to what I have ſaid on theſe texts, "p. 230. 386. before you take it for granted they are ſub-"ſervient to your purpoſe." But my purpoſe on theſe texts was thus expreſſed, "They (the apoſtles) determined all "things with the conſent of the people," and I brought Acts i. and vi. as very conſiderable inſtances to this purpoſe. Now I look to that page of your book to which you remit me on Acts i. p. 386. I find you there ſaying, "That "the body of the people there preſent were conſenters "I ſhall not queſtion." And this makes it ſuperfluous for me to labour in expoſing the weakneſs of your criticiſm on theſe words of Peter's diſcourſe, *Men brethren*, which I think will be manifeſt enough to any that will be at pains to read it. And when I conſider your p. 230. to which I am referred on Acts vi. I can find nothing there againſt my purpoſe, nor in the following page; unleſs you think your criticiſm on παν το πληθος, ſufficiently expoſed in my firſt letter, is againſt it.

2. As to Acts xi. 1.-4. which I cited for this purpoſe, plainly expreſſed thus, "And did not diſdain to ſatisfy them "as to all their conduct," you are pleaſed to tell me, "But "for what good purpoſe I know not, if it be not to put me "in mind that Peter endeavoured to ſatisfy the Jews at Je-

"ruſalem

" rusalem of the justness of his going unto the Gentiles, " which no doubt was his duty." That they were the believing Jews is manifest from ℣ 18. and that they had the liberty to require satisfaction from that apostle, even as to that part of his conduct, and that it was doubtless his duty to endeavour to satisfy them, is acknowledged by yourself. And therefore I hope you that pretend to be no more but an elder, will not reckon your people indiscreet if they treat you after the same manner in your assembly ; nor will you question that it is your duty to endeavour to satisfy them of the justness of any such part of your conduct. As to what you speak of a consequence from this, about judicatures and their jurisdiction, there is no consequence can be drawn from any scripture for the judicatures you intend, nor for their jurisdiction. Next, you tell me, " To support the same thing " you set down Matth. xviii. but take care all along to shift " any direct answer to what I have said on that text." But as I am not sensible of any care of mine on that head, so I am of the mind, that, by what I have said first and last on that text, I have not left you much to say against the purpose for which I set it down there.

3. As to Acts xi. 22. you grant, that the church which is said to be informed about the success of the gospel at Antioch was the church at Jerusalem ; but the consequence which you draw from thence you refuse, *viz.* That they who sent forth Barnabas were the whole members of that church. I had said no more upon this text, but that what was done by the apostles was said to be done by the church, because they did it with the church's consent ; and as this was modest enough, so it is no way contradicted by what you assert about what you call the authoritative mission, nor by what you alledge from Acts viii. 14. of the apostles sending Peter and John, when the church was all scattered abroad except the apostles. But you tell me, " If this text prove any thing, it " proves too much, *viz.* That the whole church were equal- " ly concerned, and acted the same part in this mission with " the apostles ; for they are said to send them forth con- " junctly, without the least hint of one part's acting authori- " tatively, and another merely by consent." But the text will not prove, that the whole body acted the same part in this mission with the apostles who were a part of it; for, when such a body as a church is said to do any thing, I must of necessity conceive, that each part acts in the way proper to it; as when I am told the parliament of Britain made a law,

I am not to imagine that there was no difference betwixt the King, the Lords, and the Commons, all acting in that matter.

You say further, "In a word, the Apostle indites his epistle "to the church of Corinth, when he appoints the excommu- "nication of the incestuous man:" well, according to your own way of reasoning in other cases, it was to be done by those to whom the epistle was indited. But you tell me, "Yet it was only the deed of the rulers of that church." Thus, it seems, you are of the mind it was only the rulers that were called to mourn, that the incestuous man might be taken away from among them, and it was only among them that this incest was, and not among the people, 1 Cor. v. 1. 2. And the rulers only were that whole lump that was in danger of being leavened with this leaven, and not the whole body that partook of the Lord's supper, ℣ 5. 6. 7. 8. And you think, it seems, that the rulers only were not to keep company, nor eat with any that was called a brother, and yet a fornicator, or the like; and they only were to judge these within, and put away evil from among them, ℣ 11. 12. 13. But how do you prove that this was only the deed of the rulers acting without the consent of the people, or that the apostle is injoining them to do this thing by themselves, without the concurrence of the people? For if you be not saying this, you are saying nothing. All I have in the proof of an assertion so very bold, so cross to the text, is a criticism upon a word in 2 Cor. ii. 6. which our translators have rendered *many*, and you think it should have been translated *chief ones* for you would have it believed, that, because πλειον, Matth. vi. 25. and xii. 41. 42. signifies *more* or *greater*, where it is placed in a comparison as an adverb; therefore πλειονων, 2 Cor. ii. 6. denotes the rulers of the church in Corinth. And it seems you are of opinion, that the forgiving and comforting of that person, or loosing him, was only the deed of these "chief ones" that bound him, and these only were to confirm their love towards him, and to give proof of their obedience to Christ, speaking in the Apostle, touching that matter. But I hope you will reconcile this opinion of yours with the text and context, 2 Cor. ii. 5.—10.

Then you signify, that Cyprian's sentiment is of no weight with you, till you understand, that the whole church, Acts xv. 22. is the worshipping assembly; but I think I have said enough to let you see that; and so Cyprian's saying must have some weight with you. You say he speaks only of his pri-

vate

vate reſolution for his practice; and this purpoſe and practice will not be an argument that the people had a negative on the preſbytery, or that each in the church was to be perſonally preſent, and give their aſſent before any juriſdictional act could be paſſed. You know beſt what you mean by this negative, and you make a beautiful diverſion from the queſtion, when you ſpeak of each in the church being perſonally preſent; but certain it is, that Cyprian did nothing of that kind, of which he ſpeaks, without the counſel of the preſbytery and the conſent of his people. And I think a more laborious anſwer to what I have told you from the ſacred oracles, together with an anſwer to what King brings from antiquity, *Inquiry into the conſtitution, &c. of the primitive church*, chap. vii. and your own Jamiſon, *Cypr. Iſot.* chap. vi. § 5. & 16. toward the cloſe, would have been very becoming, before this very bold aſſertion of yours: "As this was never the practice of the Chri-"ſtian church, ſo it is void of all foundation in the ſacred o-"racles." Further, what you mean by concurrence in juriſdictional management, I know not; only I know that Jeſus Chriſt is the only Lawgiver in the church, and his word the only law; but if you mean the concurrence of the people with their elders or biſhops in binding and looſing according to his law, then I am of opinion, that every one that conſiders the things wherein elders rule, and the nature of binding and looſing, will ſee a flagrant contradiction in this ſentence of yours. "I am very far from approving miniſters "their lording it over God's heritage; but at the ſame time, "I know no right the people have to a joint concurrence in "juriſdictional management."

I referred you, in the concluſion of my letter, to what I have written on John xviii. 36. 37. of which you have not been pleaſed to take any notice. But I find you, in excepting againſt what I alledged in my ſpeech touching the difference betwixt your pariſhes and the firſt churches, advancing ſome things abundantly confuted in that book, as your notion of kings their being nurſing fathers to the church, and of the identity of the covenant with the Jewiſh nation, and the covenant with the Chriſtian church or kingdom of heaven, p. 5. & 6. of your letter. You alſo complain of me for want of charity to the commiſſion, in ſaying, "That the commiſſion will "not affirm theſe pariſhes and their overſeers are of the ſame "kind with the firſt Chriſtian churches or congregations and "their preſbyteries." And the reaſon of your charge is, "Thus you muſt either imagine they were a ſet of men who "ſubſcribed one thing and believed another, than which

" there can be no more unchriſtian charge; or elſe, they did " affirm, that theſe pariſhes are of the ſame kind and nature " with the firſt Chriſtian churches." Thus, it ſeems, they ſubſcribed not the *Formula*, but your ſenſe of it. And if they ſubſcribed it in any other ſenſe than this of yours, they are unto you bad men. But I am not ſatisfied about your own ſubſcription, if this was it, That the churches planted by the apoſtles were pariſhes; for you have affirmed, that the churches and their preſbyteries planted by the apoſtles were not congregations, as pariſhes are, and the preſbytery of an apoſtolic church was not the preſbytery of a pariſh.

As to what you ſay of kings being nurſing fathers, if Conſtantine's becoming a nurſing father, in your ſenſe of that expreſſion, made not the churches to alter in kind from the apoſtolic inſtitution, or gave not the clergy an excellent opportunity for it, (for truly he was no way to be blamed as they), then I am miſtaken as to the ſenſe of 2 Theſſ. ii. 7. 8. and I once more deſire you may read and confute what I have ſaid on that ſubject in my book on the kingdom of Chriſt. You tell me, " It is not a perſon's living in the local " bounds of a pariſh that conſtitutes him a member of that " congregation." But I am ſure this makes him ſubject, whether he will or not, to your pariſh-diſcipline, and he muſt pay you ſtipend, if he have a heritage there. And what is it that puts him in that pariſh, if it be not living in that local bounds? Is it his coming to the kirk under the influence of cuſtom or ſuperſtition, or coming to the pariſh miniſter to get himſelf married, or to get a name to his child as neighbour and other does, and as his father did before him, that conſtitutes him a member of that congregation? I am ſure men were not thus conſtituted members of the apoſtolic churches. But you tell me what does it, in the latter end of p. 6. Now, leaving you to explain handſomely what you ſay about binding their children to do as they do, if you leave all the reſt of the pariſh out of the congregation, but thoſe you there deſcribe, I am ſure the congregation will not be parochial, but a church gathered out of the pariſh, and not joining in the pariſh-worſhip. You likewiſe aſſert, that the kingdom or nation of Scotland was brought into church-order at firſt by the preaching of the goſpel. And I marvel that no account of this influence of the goſpel, far ſurpaſſing the influence it had on the people of any nation in the apoſtles days, has come down to us. I have a ſtrong ſuſpicion, there muſt have been ſomething of your external cumulative

mulative power in the case of bringing the whole nation or kingdom into church-order. And that is not the power that makes the sort of Christians that are hated of all nations, and whose foes are those of their own house; nor the sort of churches, wherein the members stand fast in one mind and one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not terrified by their adversaries. Then you signify, that when a nation is thus brought in, their children are federally holy, as the children of the Jews, though their parents were not to be accounted visible saints. And thus I am to imagine, that the posterity of the first Christians in the eastern parts of the world are holy to this day. Neither shall I doubt but they are better people than many in Scotland that have access to know more of Christianity than they have.

Thus, Sir, I have taken some notice of your letter, and given you occasion to reconsider your principles with the cause you are opposing. And I hold what I said in the conclusion of my last letter as here again repeated. But I cannot express the confidence in any performance of mine, nor in this, that you express, while you signify your satisfaction that our epistles are to be read before Christ's tribunal. As to which, I would desire to say something like what the Apostle says, 1 Cor. iv. 3. 4. 5. which I beseech you seriously to consider. Things will appear, and persons too, in another shape before that tribunal, and we are to stand or fall there only by his word, especially his law of brotherly love to our brother whom we have seen, and there we shall not be run down by the world's cry, nor exalted by the esteem of the multitude, or by the things that procure the reputation of the world. Persons and things, now highly esteemed, will then be in abomination; and persons and things now set at nought, and had in abomination, will then be had in honour. So, wishing you may helped so to act in this world, as may tend to your honour in that day, I rest,

SIR,

Dundee, Sept. 10.
1731.

Yours, as before,

JOHN GLAS.

Of

Of the unity and distinction of the ELDER's office.

[Written in the year 1731; and now first printed.]

THE officers of Christ's institution are distinguished, first, into extraordinary and ordinary. The extraordinary are, those that were employed in the first joining together of the New-Testament church, the body of Christ, made up of Jews and Gentiles, reconciled to God, in one body, by Christ's death, and in laying the plan of gospel-churches, and in making the New-Testament revelation. Such were the apostles, the chosen eye-witnesses of the Lord's resurrection; and the prophets, inspired by the Holy Ghost for explaining infallibly the Old Testament by the things now written in the New; and the evangelists, the apostles ministers. These can be succeeded by none in that which was peculiar to them; as the nature of their work, completed when the New-Testament revelation is complete, does abundantly manifest. And yet the churches of Christ may be said to have them still, as, in the days of our Lord, the Jews had Moses and the prophets to hear. But they are succeeded in all that was not peculiar to them by the ordinary officers; as we see the deacons in Jerusalem took a part of the work that at first was in the hands of the apostles, even that ministry that is distinguished from the ministry of the word. And then the elders were employed in the rest of the work of the apostles that was not peculiar to them; so that the apostles, after the setting apart of elders, are distinguished from them also, no doubt by that which was peculiar to them *.

The ordinary offices, or orders of ordinary offices, are these two, and no more; the order of elders or bishops, and the order of deacons; and beside the bishop or elder, and the deacon, with whom we may reckon the deaconess, or the widow ministring to the sick, there is no ordinary church-officer.

That bishop and elder are the same in the New Testament, is manifest from these scriptures, Acts xx. 17. 28. Tit. i. 5. 7.

* Acts xv. 2. 4. 6. 22. Acts xvi. 4.

1 Pet.

1 Pet. v. 1. 2.; and they are made the same in that precious remain of antiquity, Clemens Romanus's epistle to the Corinthians, written in the name of the church sojourning in Rome. But this is not questioned among them with whom we have to do at present, who acknowledge the division of ordinary church-offices into these two, and no more, the elder or bishop, and the deacon.

And this distinction is according to the scripture, where we find the ministry of tables distinguished from the ministry of the word *. In the church in Jerusalem, which was the first, and the pattern to the rest, we find elders and deacons †. And, after that example, in the church at Philippi we see the bishops and deacons. The same distinction is observed in Paul's directions to Timothy about church-officers, when he lays down the characters of the bishop, and then the characters of the deacon distinctly ‡. And, as was noticed before, concerning the distinction of the deacon's work from the ministry of the word; so it is the character whereby the bishop is distinguished especially from the deacon, that he must be apt to teach ‖. As all the work of church-officers is ministry; so we find the office and work of the deacon peculiarly called *ministry*, and so distinguished from the office and work of the bishop or elder. Thus we find that officer, in distinction from the bishop, called *deacon*, that is, minister, or servant. We find this same distinction in Paul's discourse of church-officers to the Romans, to whom he speaks, or the Holy Ghost in him, in the prospect of that extravagant departure from the institution of Christ in this matter that was to come to pass in that church. For as it is the different gifts or powers granted by Christ for doing the work of the offices that makes the offices different, so he distinguishes these gifts or powers only into two, *viz.* prophecy and ministry; and there is no church-officer but what is comprehended under the one or the other of these; so that every church-officer is either a prophet or a minister: "Having "then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to "us, whether prophecy, according to the proportion of faith; "or ministry, on ministring **." Where prophecy is not to be taken for the extraordinary gift, but, as the apostle defines it, for the gift of speaking unto men to edification, and

* Acts vi. 2. 4. † Acts vi. xi. 30. xv. xxi. 18.
‡ 1 Tim. i. ‖ 1 Tim. iii. 2.
** Rom. xii. 6. 7.

exhortation,

exhortation, and comfort *. The same distinction is made by the Apostle Peter; and what he says serves to illustrate what Paul says to the Romans. His words are: "As every "man hath received the gift, minister the same one to ano- "ther, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If "any man speak, as the oracles of God; if any man mini- "ster, as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all "things may be glorified through Jesus Christ †." Paul condescends on the different ways of ministring these two gifts by different persons: but while they are all acting as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, they are ministering no more but one or other of these gifts, *i. e.* they are either speaking as the oracles of God, or ministring as of the ability that God giveth.

It is easy to understand which of these is the bishop's gift, and which the deacon's. For as the deacon's work is only a work of obedience to the word, so the bishop is distinguished, as has been observed, from the deacon, by his aptness to teach. And therefore the gift of prophecy, and of speaking as becomes the oracles of God, as distinguished from the gift of ministry, is the bishop's gift, whereby he is differenced from the deacon.

Our concern at present is not with the deacon's office, further than to take notice, that some class him that ruleth ‡ with the deacons, because mentioned among them, and because they are of opinion, that he cannot be classed with them that have the gift of prophecy. But, as the order wherein things are set down cannot be always brought as an argument of their priority or posteriority, so we find him that ruleth among the elders, and expressly called *elder*, where he is distinguished from them that labour in the word and doctrine ‖: and therefore we are not to seek him among the deacons, where elder or bishop, and deacon, are distinguished; or where prophecy, and speaking as becomes the oracles of God, stands distinguished from ministry. He must be found among the bishops, or them that have the gift of prophecy, or of speaking the word of God, or he is to be found no where.

When we look to Matth. xviii. and the Acts of the Apostles, and the rest of the New-Testament scripture touching elders or bishops, it is manifest, that, by the institution

* 1 Cor. xiv. 3. † 1 Pet. iv. 10. 11. ‡ Rom. 12. 8.
‖ 1 Tim. v. 17.

of

of Christ, there ought to be a plurality of elders in every church. For, as our Lord speaks of two or three as presiding in the church, to which he grants the power of binding and loosing, Matth. xviii.; so we find the apostles, that at first were elders to the church in Jerusalem, left a plurality of elders in that church; and, after this example, we read of Paul and Barnabas their ordaining elders in every church ∽. There was a plurality of elders in the Ephesian church *; and that a plurality is intended in the designation, *Angel of the church*, in the epistles to the churches of Asia, appears from Rev. ii. 18. 24. There was likewise a plurality of bishops in the church at Philippi †. And Paul directs Titus to ordain a plurality of elders in every city in Crete ‡. And in all the directions to elders, touching their duty toward the flock, and the directions to the people, as to their duty toward them, they are still spoken of as a company, and more than one ‖. And this is likewise evident from the distinction that is made among elders or bishops; as where we find elders ruling well distinguished from elders labouring in the word and doctrine **, and him that teacheth, him that exhorteth, and him that ruleth ††. Where any one of these is wanting in any church, there is a defect; and where there is but one of them, the want is such that it would appear from Matth. xviii. the want must be supplied before a church can proceed formally to bind or loose in Christ's name.

The names and designations given to this order of church-officers are, πρεσβυτεροι, ‡‡ *elders*, επισκοποι, ||| *overseers*, or *bishops*, ἡγουμενοι, + *leaders*, προϊστοτες, ++ and προϊσταμενοι, = *presidents*; which designation, though it may be common to all elders or bishops, as presiding in the church whereof they are overseers, according to that of Tertullian, when speaking of a Christian assembly for prayers, and the reading of the scriptures, and the exercise of discipline, *Præsident probati quique seniores*; yet, in the distinction of elders, it is applied to him that is distinguished from him that teacheth and him that exhorteth ≡. And though all elders be pastors, ποιμενες, and commanded to feed the flock whereof they

∽ Acts xiv. * Acts xx. † Phil. i. ‡ Tit. i. ‖ 1 Thess. v. Heb. xiii. 1 Pet. v. ** Rom. xii. †† 1 Tim. v. 17. ‡‡ 1 Tim. v. 17. Acts xx. 17. ||| Acts xx. 28. + Heb. xiii. 17. ++ 1 Tim. v. 17. = 1 Thess. v. 12. Rom. xii. 8. ≡ Rom. xii. 8. 1 Tim. v. 17.

are bishops*; yet we find pastors in distinction from teachers; and where there are but these two branches in the distinction, we must understand by pastors both them that exhort and them that rule well†: so, though all teachers be governors, as being elders or bishops; yet where we find teachers and governments distinctly mentioned, there, by governments, κυβερνησεις, we must understand both him that ruleth and him that exhorteth, if we look upon the distinction of elders to be there full and comprehensive of all elders‡. We find the bishops or elders of a church thus designed, τυς κοπιοντας εν υμιν, *them that labour among you*; ὑ προισαμενυς υμων εν κυριω, *and your presidents in the Lord*; ὑ νυθετυντας υμας, *and that admonish you*‖. And whether the distinction of elders be here pointed at, it may be a question. There is another designation utterly common to all elders or bishops, and that is, Θευ ὀικονομος, *the steward of God*; as appears from these words of Paul to Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that "thou shouldst —— ordain elders in every city.—— If any "be blameless,—— for a bishop must be blameless, as the "steward of God**."

From what has been said, it seems the bishop's office is one; and yet there is a distinction in that office. The unity of the office appears from the foresaid division of church-offices, and the gifts or powers given by Christ for exercising them, into two, and no more; and from the characters requisite in every one that is at all an elder or bishop, which we have in Paul's directions to Timothy, 1 epist. iii. and to Titus, chap. i. as to the ordination of elders; where, besides what relates to their disposition and conversation, there is no more required to qualify them for the highest parts of the work of that office, and no less is requisite to fit any man for being at all in that office, than this, that he be apt to teach††, and that he be holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, τυ κατα την διδαχην πιςυ λογυ, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, εν τη διδασκαλια ὑγιαινυσῃ, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. From this it appears, that the bishop's or elder's gift is, an ability freely granted by Jesus Christ for opening up and applying the word of God unto men. And thus it is that which is called prophecy, Rom. xii. and the gift of speaking, 1 Pet. iv.; and is distinguished from ministry, the deacon's gift. The distinction in the elder's or

* Acts xx. 1 Pet. v. † Eph. iv. 11. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 28.
‖ 1 Thess. v. 12. ** Tit. i. 5. 6. 7. †† 1 Tim. iii. 2.

bishop's

biſhop's office is chiefly manifeſt from theſe two texts, tho' there be alſo ſome inſinuation of it in other texts before mentioned. 1 Tim. v. 17. "Let the elders that rule well be "counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially they that la- "bour in the word and doctrine." Rom. xii. 7. "He that "teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; "he that ruleth, with diligence."

How this diſtinction agrees with the unity of the office, and that unity with this diſtinction, is a queſtion of ſome difficulty, yea, and importance, to them that want to be acquainted with the mind of God in his word, that they may not ſwerve from his inſtitutions, but keep them pure and entire. And ſuch will not be ſatisfied in any explication of the diſtinction that overthrows the unity, nor of the unity that undoes the diſtinction: for to explain one part of the ſcripture in an inconſiſtency with another, is indeed to corrupt the word of God, and wreſt and pervert it. Thus, while men explain the unity of the godhead, aſſerted in the ſcriptures, in ſuch a manner as to deſtroy the diſtinction in the godhead, there alſo aſſerted, or when they explain the diſtinction in ſuch a manner as deſtroys the unity, they wreſt and corrupt the word of God, and make it of none effect to themſelves, while they ſtudy to reconcile it to their own prejudices, and do not ſubject themſelves as little children to the authority of God in his word. Therefore we find our Lord, when Satan tells him, "It is written," anſwering thus, "It "is written again."

The opinion, of a ruler, or ruling elder, that has no power granted him by Jeſus Chriſt for teaching and preaching, or adminiſtrating baptiſm or the Lord's ſupper, that pleads a foundation in the forecited texts, eſtabliſhing a diſtinction in the elder's office, ſeems to overthrow the unity of that office. For ſuch an officer muſt be of another kind than thoſe elders or biſhops whoſe commiſſion we have Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. there being no authority granted there to rule without teaching: "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I "command you: and lo, I am with you alway, to the end of "the world." And truly, if we conſider the nature of the rule and government of a church, as diſtinguiſhed from the government of the civil magiſtrate, and as it touches the conſciences of men, and as it is the government of Jeſus Chriſt among his willing people, who has afforded the overſeers of a flock of his no other inſtrument of government but his word, we will eaſily ſee, that a ruler that is not capable to teach or preach, or to open up and apply the word of God

unto men in a constant way, is indeed a very inconsistent piece of work, and an idol shepherd. Neither is there any authority granted in that commission to any to teach and preach God's word, or to teach his people to observe all that he has commanded, without an authority to baptize the disciples. So, if there be such a bishop as rules without a power of teaching and baptizing, he must be of another kind than that bishop whose commission is in that text. 2. Such an officer must be of a kind different from him that is described and characterised 1 Tim. iii. and Tit. i. For that officer is the steward of God, and so the dispenser of the ordinances of Christ to the flock: that officer is apt to teach, and holds fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, so as to be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. And if this be not the qualification of a minister of the word, or of him that bears the commission Matth. xxviii. where are we to seek his qualification in the New Testament? But this is the qualification of every elder, as is manifest in these passages. Therefore he is no elder that is not qualified for the ministry of the word, and is not a steward of the mysteries of God. 3. This officer seems to be of a different kind from the elders or bishops whom Paul exhorts, Acts xx. and Peter, 1 epist. v.: for these were all pastors or shepherds, feeders of the flock of God. For as Peter, who was an elder of the church in Jerusalem, received commandment from the Lord to feed his sheep and his lambs, so he gives the same commandment to all the elders, and exhorts them to feed the flock which is among them; as Paul exhorts the elders of the church in Ephesus, "to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost "made them overseers, to feed the church of God, which "he hath purchased with his own blood." And from Paul's setting himself before them as an example in his teaching, and the reason he gives, ẏ 29. 30. for his charging them to take heed to themselves, and the flock, to feed the church, it is most evident, that the feeding there spoke of cannot be but by men to whom the word of God is committed, as able to teach others: for he speaks to them of a feeding of the flock, in opposition to false teachers, and to some of themselves that might arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. And as there must be two kinds of rulers or feeders of the flock, the one ruling by the word of God, committed to him as able to teach others, and the other ruling without having that word committed to him as able to teach

teach others; so this last is not among the pastors exhorted by Paul in that passage, and must be a strange kind of a ruler of a flock of Christ, or of his sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him. 4. The manner wherein the institution of this ruler, that has no ability to teach or preach, is sought in the texts that speak of the distinction in the bishop's office, seems to cut off the ministers of the word, acknowledged to be elders and bishops, from ruling. For as to Rom. xii. by that same rule by which he that ruleth is said neither to teach nor exhort, it must be said, he that teacheth is not an exhorter, and he that exhorteth is not a teacher, and neither of them rules. And as to 1 Tim. v. 17. by the same rule by which it is asserted, that there is a ruling elder that is not a minister of the word, it must be also asserted, that the ministers of the word are not rulers, or that the elders that teach and preach do not rule. For the text makes them one in this, that they are elders; but distinguishes these elders, by ascribing ruling to some of them, and the word and doctrine unto others: so that ruling is hereby made as much the property of the one elder as the word and doctrine is made the property of the other elder. But the text only distinguishes the elders that *rule well*, καλως προεστωτες, from the elders that *labour*, κοπιωντες, in the word and doctrine; and it it does not distinguish elders merely by ruling on the one side, and by the word and doctrine on the other. And if it should be alledged, that especially μαλιστα, which imports the distinction, reduplicates not merely upon *elders*, but upon *elders that rule well*; so that the text cannot be understood to run thus, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of "double honour, especially the elders that labour in the "word and doctrine;" but thus, "Let the elders that rule "well be counted worthy of double honour, especially the "elders ruling well, that labour in the word and doctrine:" then it must be manifested, that the text is not capable to be taken the first way, but must be understood as running in the second manner; and if it should be taken that way, then we shall be to seek as to the necessity and use of the mere ruling elder. For if the ministers of the word, notwithstanding their labour in the word and doctrine, do not only rule, but rule well, then the work of ruling may not only be done, but well done, by the elders that labour in the word and doctrine: and so the need and use of mere ruling elders, to assist the ministers of the word in ruling, that it may be well done, without taking them off too much from giving themselves

selves as much as they ought to the word and doctrine, or from labouring in it, is utterly taken away.

On the other hand, they that deny the mere ruling elder to be of divine institution, and own no bishop or elder but him that is apt to teach, and yet think, that a particular church or congregation may be sufficiently taught, exhorted, and ruled, by one bishop, as having power to do all these, or that all the bishop's work may be done to full purpose in a church without three bishops, seem to overthrow the distinction in that office plainly pointed out in the scriptures, and to make void Christ's institution of a plurality of elders or bishops in every church. Though the whole exercise of the bishop's gift be called teaching, Matth. xxviii. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 9. yet there is a branch of that work that is designed teaching, in distinction from exhorting and ruling. We must therefore consider, how the bishop's gift, which is one, admits of this distinction in its exercise; and what we are to understand by teaching, exhorting, and ruling, as each of them are ascribed to different persons, who yet can each of them teach, exhort, and rule. As the apostleship was one, and yet is distinguished into the apostleship of the circumcision and the apostleship of the uncircumcision *; and as the deacon's gift is one, and yet we find him that sheweth mercy distinguished from him that distributeth †; so, in the bishop's office, we find him that teacheth, him that exhorteth, and him that ruleth. And this distinction ariseth, not from any difference in the nature of the gift, nor from such different degrees of that same gift as may be found in different persons, or in the same person at different times; but from the different objects upon which it is exercised, and the different matter contained in the word, applicable to these different objects; and from the extensiveness of the bishop's work, which is such, that though any one bishop may be employed in all the parts of it, yet he cannot excel in all the parts, and he is denominated and distinguished from others, by that part wherein he excels. The bishop has to do with the understandings of the flock, to inform their judgments in the knowledge of the mysteries of the gospel, and to instruct them in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and much of the word of God is applicable this way: and he that excels in this, though he can also exhort and rule, is called the teacher. For one may be excellent at this that is

* Gal. ii. † Rom. xii.

not

not so very excellent at exhorting and ruling. The bishop has also to do with the wills and affections of the flock, to engage or disengage them, in a suitableness to the gospel-revelation, and with the various postures wherein these are to be found; and much of the word of God points this way, and tends to this purpose. He that excels in this, though he can also teach and rule, is called the exhorter; and one may excel in this, that is not so excellent in teaching or ruling. The bishop has also to do with the outward conversations of all the flock, to order them as it becometh the gospel: and as the glory of Christ's name is much concerned in this, so much of the word of God is taken up in this, and is applicable this way. He that excels in the application of the word to this purpose, though he can also teach and exhort, is called the *ruler*; and one may excel in this, that is not so very excellent in the business of the teacher and exhorter. The elders that excel in ruling, and therefore bestow their greatest diligence in that, are the elders that rule well; and the elders that excel in exhortation, and in teaching, and therefore exert their utmost, or labour in the word of exhortation and in doctrine, are the elders that labour in the word and doctrine. And they that excel in ruling, and give themselves mainly to that, are not worthy of blame, though they do not give themselves most to the teacher's and exhorter's business, but are to be honoured, in bestowing their greatest diligence in that part of the elder's work wherein they excel. So likewise they that excel in teaching and in exhortation, and labour or exert themselves most in that, are not worthy of blame, for not exerting themselves most in ruling, wherein they do not excel, but are to be honoured for labouring in that wherein they excel. The Apostle orders, that double honour, or maintenance, be given the elders that rule well; double the honour that belongs to the deaconess: and he appoints, that this double honour should be especially given to them that labour in the word and doctrine, and they should be especially attended to in the giving of this honour; because their labour requires yet greater intension of mind and heart, and calls them yet more off from labouring with their hands *, than the diligence of them that rule well does: even as the master in some handicraft, having several workmen under him occupied in that same craft, while, as he finds needful, he can employ them all in any

* Acts xx. 17. 18. 34. 35.

one

one part of the craft; yet, for ordinary, sets each of them to that part of it wherein they excel, and gives best wages to them that work in the nicest parts of the craft; and so every part of his work is handsomely done, and his business is managed to such purpose as it could not be, if, for ordinary, he employed them all indifferently in the whole of the occupation.

The Lord Jesus hath appointed a plurality of bishops in every church, all of them apt to teach, and able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers, all of them stewards of God: but because the work for which they are thus qualified consists of several parts, and though each of them can act in each part, yet no one of them can excel in every part; he hath appointed each of them to give himself chiefly to that part wherein he excels, that all the parts of the great and good work of a bishop may be excellently done, unto the glory of his name, and the good of the flock whereof they are overseers. Supposing, then, only one minister of the word in a church, applying himself to all these indifferently, no part of the work could be done excellently; or, supposing him to give himself mostly to one of them, as he readily will, then the rest cannot go well forward. Again, if we suppose two, or three, or more ministers of the word, all of them labouring in that part which is peculiarly called *teaching*, the judgments of the flock would, in that case, be excellently informed, errors and mistakes corrected, and they would grow in knowledge; but the exercise of their hearts and affections would not be answerably lively: and it is not likely, that the love of Christ and his people, and the hatred of self and the world, would grow exceedingly, while they are not plied with the diligent exercise of that which is peculiarly called *exhortation*; nor would their conversation among themselves, and toward all men, hold pace with their growth in knowledge, or be attended to, and directed with that diligence that might serve to make them shine as lights in the world, that others seeing their good works might glorify their Father in heaven. Growing in knowledge, without the other two, would make monstrous Christians. The like may be said of them labouring in exhortation: for, in that case, the flock would hardly grow in knowledge, nor in zeal of good works, and in an outward conversation becoming the gospel, while they would be mainly taken up with inward impressions on their hearts and affections, and the various postures of these: and this also could not stand, or

make

make any right progreſs, without the other two. And if more miniſters of the word than one in a church ſhould give themſelves mainly, in their preaching and other exerciſes, to the direction and correction of the converſations of the flock, and to the buſineſs of preſiding in the diſcipline of the church; this, without the influence of that which is peculiarly called *teaching* and *exhortation*, preſuppoſed to it, and keeping pace with it, would tend to formality, and iſſue in ſomething like Phariſaical righteouſneſs; yea, it could not long ſubſiſt without the other two. And if we ſuppoſe ſeveral miniſters of the word in one church, giving themſelves indifferently to all theſe, none of them could be done to ſuch purpoſe, as by every one of them his giving himſelf moſt to that wherein he excels. And as each of them would do that part beſt, ſo they would themſelves moſt readily grow and improve in that, and be helpful and profitable to one another, as well as to the flock; ſo that one of them could not ſay he had no need of the other.

It was through the pride and indolence of biſhops, and the people's negligence, in holding faſt the apoſtolic inſtitution, that this wiſe and beautiful order was broke through, and way thereby made for the revelation of the man of ſin. And now, ſince men have found the wiſdom of words, or the wiſdom of the ſcribe, and of the diſputer of this world, to be a neceſſary or uſeful (as they reckon uſefulneſs) qualification of a biſhop, a miniſter of the word, and that it required much expence to train them up in that wiſdom, and then to ſupport them, when trained, in ſuch ſtate as might ſerve to beget reſpect to them in the minds of ſuch people as are not ſo much affected with that authority that is proper to the Chriſtian biſhop, they think they do well when they get one biſhop in every congregation, with a company of ſuch elders as can neither teach nor preach, nor adminiſtrate baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, nor excommunicate, without a claſſical preſbytery; and theſe they call *ruling elders*. And of ſuch elders there is no footſtep to be found in the New Teſtament, nor in all antiquity: for after the riſe of one biſhop in every congregation, all the preſbyters or elders in his preſbytery, had power of preaching and adminiſtrating the ſacraments under him. And whereas ſome of the moſt knowing in this matter do not inſiſt for ſuch elders as church-officers of divine inſtitution, perceiving the inconſiſtency of that with the ſcriptural diſtinction of the orders

of church-officers into two and no more; but contend for them as the representatives of the people, (whose consent in binding and loosing they find in the writings of the ancients, as they might also find it in the scripture), to preserve their rights against the incroachments of the bishops; It must be considered, that the scriptural bishops or elders, and the primitive elders, among whom the one bishop presided, were, in the matter of binding and loosing, presiding in the church or the whole flock, of which they were presidents, which was the binding and loosing society. So that the people themselves having a right to be personally present, and to consent or dissent, this right is taken from them by such a representation as cannot be manifested to have any foundation either in the scriptures, or in primitive antiquity.

A PETITION to the Aſſociate Preſbytery, by four brethren;

With a DIALOGUE upon it by ſix who have as good a right to judge of what is teſtified by Jeſus Chriſt the Lord, in the ſcriptures, as the Aſſociate Preſbytery, or any other preſbytery.

A nation, and a church of nations ſhall be of thee! Gen. xxxv. 11.

Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations. *Rom.* iv. 16. 17.

There be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed. As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, If any preach any other goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accurſed. *Gal.* i. 6.——9.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1737.]

Unto the moderator and remanent members of the presbytery aſſociated in the cauſe of the covenanted work of reformation, and teſtifying againſt the ſeveral ſteps of defection from the ſame,

The Repreſentation and Petition of the perſons ſubſcribing,

Humbly ſheweth,

THAT whereas you muſt be looked on as the fitteſt men to convince gainſayers, by the word of God, and the readieſt

readieſt to render to every one that aſketh you a ſcriptural reaſon of the cauſe for which you contend with ſo much zeal, as if your hope depended upon it, we judge it moſt proper to lay before you ſome difficulties we have, as to that covenanted work and ſtate of the church, to which you are bearing witneſs, earneſtly deſiring you may take them under your ſerious conſideration, and do your beſt to ſatisfy us and all others of the truth of your teſtimony by the word of God. For, who can be heard teſtifying concerning the covenant and church of God, without the ſcriptures? Or, who can oblige us to ſerve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt without his law?

Though this may juſtly claim the preference to any other thing about which your time may be employed; yet, to ſave your time, we chuſe to propoſe our difficulties as briefly as we can, in the manner following.

1. We even find it difficult to reconcile theſe nations of Britain and Ireland, being all Chriſtians, or diſciples of Chriſt, and ruled by Chriſtian magiſtrates, as his covenanted kingdom, to theſe words of his, Mark x. 42.—45. "Ye "know that they which are accounted to rule over the na- "tions, [τῶν ἐθνῶν.] exerciſe lordſhip over them, and their "great ones exerciſe authority upon them. But it ſhall not "be ſo among you; but whoſoever will be great among you, "ſhall be your miniſter; and whoſoever of you will be the "chiefeſt, ſhall be ſervant of all: For even the Son of man "came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give "his life a ranſom for many." And, Luke xxii. 24——30. "For whether is greater he that ſitteth at meat, or he that "ſerveth? Is not he that ſitteth at meat? But I am among "you as he that ſerveth. Ye are they which have continued "with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a "kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me; that ye "may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and ſit on "thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael."

The more we think on this diſcourſe, with the occaſion of it, the leſs are we able to reconcile it with the nations made Chriſtian, and brought or kept in ſubjection to the miniſters of the goſpel, by ſecular power.

2. Nor do we perceive how the following exhortations can apply to a nation of this world, ſuch as Scotland, or how it could remain a nation in obeying it, *viz.* Luke xii. 29. to 34. "And ſeek not ye what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall "drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind: for all theſe

"things

" things do the nations of the world ſeek after; and your " father knoweth that you have need of theſe things; but " rather ſeek ye the kingdom of God, and all theſe things " ſhall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it is " your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom. Sell " that ye have, and give alms: provide yourſelves bags " which wax not old, a treaſure in the heavens that faileth " not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupt- " eth: for where your treaſure is, there will your heart be " alſo."

As a nation of this world, ſubſiſting in the purſuit of the deſign of this exhortation would be a thing very extraordinary, we cannot wonder at our Lord's making ſuch diſtinction as he here makes betwixt his little flock, and the nations of this world.

3. We have not yet ſeen any thing that is ſufficient to ſhew us the conſiſtency betwixt the covenanted kingdom, concerning which you teſtify, and our Lord's good confeſſion that he witneſſed before Pontius Pilate, concerning his kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. And here, for the ſake of brevity, we refer you to the things offered in the explication of that text, in the book, intitled, *The teſtimony of the King of martyrs*, which, no doubt, you have ſeen.

4. Nor can we underſtand how our Lord's words to the Jewiſh nation, Matth. xxi. 43. as applied by Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 9. 10. can be applicable to the ſtate of the nation of Scotland, under the national covenant, or of Britain and Ireland, under the ſolemn league and covenant.

His words are: " Therefore I ſay unto you, the kingdom " of God ſhall be taken from you, and given to a nation " bringing forth the fruits thereof." And Peter ſays to the elect, ſtrangers and pilgrims ſcattered throughout many countries, " Ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, " an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye ſhould ſhew " forth the praiſes of him who hath called you out of dark- " neſs into his marvellous light; which in time paſt were " not a people, but are now the people of God; which " had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

And if you pleaſe to compare this with Exod. xix. 5. 6. and Rom. xi. 17.——20. and tell us how the nations were ingrafted in the days of the apoſtles, and how they were to ſtand, it would ſerve much to clear this whole matter.

We have been conſidering the ſeveral things ordinarily inſiſted on to ſhew a ſcripture-warrant for the covenanted work

to

to which you are bearing witneſs; and we judge it not amiſs to lay before you the exceptions which we are not able to remove, being willing, by your help, to ſee the weakneſs of them, if poſſible.

1ſt, The firſt argument, taken from the covenant the Lord made with Iſrael at Sinai, renewed by the kings and people of that nation, after their backſlidings from it, and by the captives returned from Babylon, we are not capable to reconcile with Gal. iv. 24.——31. and Heb. viii. 6.——13.

The argument ſtands on this foundation, That the new covenant is not another covenant than the covenant at Sinai, but that they are two diſpenſations of one and the ſelf-ſame covenant; contrary to the expreſs words of the apoſtle, and to his whole deſign in theſe texts.

And when we conſider his deſcription of the people related to God in the new covenant, in diſtinction from the people to whom he ſtood related in that old covenant, we cannot apply it to any nation of this world; at leaſt it never was applicable, ſo far as we have heard, to the bulk of the people in Britain and Ireland, far leſs to the whole, no not when they took the ſolemn league and covenant.

And further, when we think of Chriſt in the loins of Iſrael, the children of Abraham according to the fleſh, as the foundation of the relation betwixt God and that nation; and when we view the law or covenant wherein God declared himſelf their God, as given to that nation of which Chriſt was to come, with a deſign that it ſhould be fulfilled by him, as the end of that law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth; we have a queſtion, If theſe who are preſſing upon us a national covenant with God, according to that, be not thereby denying that Chriſt is come in the fleſh? 1 John iv. 3.

2dly, The next argument from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning the nations, ſeems to us to ſerve againſt the apoſtolic explication of theſe prophecies, whereof we offer you one remarkable inſtance, Acts xv. 14.——17. "Simeon hath declared how God at the firſt did viſit the nations, to take out of them [εξ εθνων] a people for his name. "And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is "written, After this I will return, and will build again the "tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build "again the ruins thereof, and I will ſet it up, that the reſidue of men might ſeek after the Lord, and all the nations "[παντα τα εθνη] upon whom my name is called, ſaith the "Lord, who doth all theſe things."

If

If the word that is tranſlated *nations*, in the Lord's commiſſion to the apoſtles to *go and teach all nations*, [παντα τα εθνη] had been ſo tranſlated where-ever it is uſed in the apoſtolic writings, which ſhew us how they executed that commiſſion according to the prophecies, every reader of the Engliſh bible would eaſily ſee, that national churches were never intended in the commiſſion "to teach all nations," nor in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament about the nations.

As all theſe prophecies go upon the footing of that promiſe to Abraham, "In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the "earth be bleſſed," the Apoſtle explains them quite away from national churches, by his application of that grand promiſe, Gal. iii. 13. 14. "Chriſt hath redeemed us from the "curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us;——That "the bleſſing of Abraham might come on the nations "[εις τα εθνη] through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might receive "the promiſe of the Spirit through faith."

We cannot but look on every interpretation of the prophets that is not brought from the New Teſtament, nor directed by it, as a "private interpretation;" and therefore, if we ſhould take up with an application of the Old-Teſtament prophecies to national churches and covenants, ſo very different from the apoſtolic application of them, we might fear our becoming ſome way partakers in that cenſure, which is inſinuated by the Apoſtle, when he is directing Chriſtians how to take heed to the word of Old-Teſtament prophecy, which was confirmed on the mount of transfiguration, 2 Pet. i. 16.——21. and ii. 1. He ſays, "Knowing this firſt, that "no prophecy of the ſcriptures is of any private interpreta-"tion: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will "of man; but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved "by the Holy Ghoſt. But there were falſe prophets alſo a-"mong the people, even as there ſhall be falſe teachers a-"mong you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable hereſies, "even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon "themſelves ſwift deſtruction. And many ſhall follow their "pernicious ways, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall "be evil ſpoken of."

We are of opinion, that not only theſe who deny his Godhead, and deny him as the alone Lord of the church, are to be accounted deniers of the Lord that bought them, but they alſo who deny his dying teſtimony concerning his kingdom, and his redeeming a peculiar people out of every nation, according to the prophecies, Titus ii. 14. Rev. v. 9. and who

deny

deny his giving himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world, according to the will of God and our father, Gal. i. 4. or who deny the neceſſary connection betwixt ſuffering with him in this world, and reigning with him in the world to come, 2 Tim. ii. 11. 12. and iii. 12. 13. The Apoſtle ſignifies this was to be done by men that ſeemed to be bought by the Lord, and not expreſsly, but under a cover, and by private interpretations of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament; ſo that we cannot vindicate them from this charge, who would build a worldly kingdom to Chriſt in the nations of this world, upon the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, about the nations; thus fulfilling their own luſt after power, and wealth, and worldly eaſe, to the great reproach of Chriſtianity. And the Apoſtle offers us an excellent preſervative againſt all the feigned words whereby ſuch falſe teachers draw the multitude, when he ſays, in the concluſion of his diſcourſe on that ſubject, chap. iii. 2. "That ye may be mindful of the words which were "ſpoken before by the holy prophets, and of the command-"ment of us the apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour." See likewiſe 1 John iv. 5. 6.

3*dly*, We hear another argument boaſted of as invincible, from a prophecy in the book of the Revelation, chap. xi. 15. But when we conſider that text and context, we ſee not ſufficient reaſon for this boaſting: for the words of the text are, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of "our Lord and of his Chriſt," (or, "are become our Lord's "and his Chriſt's,") "and he ſhall reign for ever and ever." And we are as ſure that no kingdom of this world will ſtand "for ever," as we are that Chriſt's "kingdom is not of this "world." The context, ẏ 17. 18. repreſents the nations as angry at Chriſt's kingdom to the end; even as he ſaid, his people ſhould be "hated of all nations," and ſhould "en-"dure it to the end," Matth. xxiv. 9.——13.

Whether we take this text in the Revelation to refer to Dan. ii. 7. or explain it by what follows, in the more particular account of the events of the ſeventh trumpet, eſpecially by what is ſaid, Rev. xx 4.——6. and xxi. 24.——27. and xxii. 5. we cannot find the accompliſhment of it in any time before the reſurrection of the juſt, and the putting down of all rule, and all authority and power; and then ſhall that promiſe be performed, Rev. ii. 26. "He that overcometh and "keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power "over the nations, and he ſhall rule them with a rod of i-

"ron;

" ron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to " shivers, even as I received of my Father." But till that time Christ must rule in the midst of his enemies; as it is signified that the nations are angry till his wrath come, as the recompence of their anger.

It were easy to show, from the book of the Revelation, that the followers of Jesus Christ must remain in a humble suffering state, in conformity to their leader, " the Lamb " that was slain," until the time of Antichrist's destruction, by the brightness of his second coming, even the time of their conformity to him in his resurrection from the dead. See, for instance, Rev. vii. 9. 13. 14. And you would contribute much to the removing of our difficulties about your testimony, if you should take pains to shew us, how a body-politic, a kingdom, or nation of this world, can become the kingdom of Christ, by devoting itself to conformity to him in his humiliation and sufferings in this world, in the hope of conformity to him in his resurrection and glory in the world to come.

We find the outer court not measured, " because it is gi- " ven to the nations who tread the holy city under foot " forty-two months," Rev. xi. 2. And we see " the whore," or false church, " sitting on many waters," *i. e.* peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, Rev. xvii. 15. And " power is given the beast over all kindreds, and tongues, " and nations, and all that dwell on the earth worship him, " whose names are not written in the slain Lamb's book of " life, from the foundation of the world," Rev. xiii. 7. 8. These are the nations brought under the false church, by the power of the kings of the earth that commit fornication with her. The Roman church is very confident, that the nations and kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, by surrendering themselves to her, and applies the prophecies about the nations with as much assurance to the Christian kings and nations in her communion, as they can be applied to the covenanted kingdoms that cast off her uniformity, and put on another in its place; but in both these applications we must take nations and kingdoms in the very same sense, and in both we must understand the kingdom or dominion of Christ to be the rule and authority of the clergy over the nations of this world, through the power and strength of the kings of the earth given unto them to make uniformity, [ποιησαι μιαν γνωμην], according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Rev. xvii. 13. 17.

If we be not ſatisfied in the true ſigns and wonders wrought in confirmation of the New Teſtament when it came forth, and be not willing to reſt in the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt ſealed by his blood, and the teſtimony of his Spirit in his martyrs the apoſtles, which is only pure and entire in the New Teſtament ſcripture, we may hear every ſet of clergymen teſtifying of their uniformity, and their kingdom, and pleading the blood of martyrs, ſigns, and the wonderful concurrence of Providence, in confirmation of their teſtimony; but when it comes to this, the Roman church has more of this kind to pretend than any of them, though, when they inſiſt on this, they take to themſelves one of the cleareſt marks of Antichriſt, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. 10. 11.

4thly, It is not eaſy to ſee how the argument for national covenanting is drawn from the practice of the churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1.——5. The foundation of the argument is to be ſought, eſpecially in the Apoſtle's ſaying, That "the churches of Macedonia firſt gave their own ſelves to "the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." And it muſt go upon ſuch an interpretation of theſe words as this is, *viz.* the churches of Macedonia devoted themſelves firſt to the Lord, as one national church, in a covenant, whereby Macedonia became the Lord's nation, bound to employ its whole power for the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, as the only religion of that country, and for the extirpation of every other; and next, they devoted themſelves to the miniſters of the goſpel, to walk together in uniform ſubjection to them, and to bring the whole country into that uniformity, by the ſaid extirpating power.

But nothing can be imagined further from the mind of the Apoſtle, and the caſe of the churches of Macedonia, than this is. It is ſurpriſing, that a foundation for any thing of this kind ſhould be ſought, in the Apoſtle's ſetting forth the rich liberality of the churches of Macedonia in their affliction and poverty, as an example of moſt chearful liberal alms giving; and eſpecially in his ſetting forth their unexpected forwardneſs in it, as "firſt giving themſelves," in what they gave, "to the Lord," for the relief of his poor ſaints, and next "to them" whom they preſſed to take the charge and truſt of that gift, wherein they "gave themſelves."

When we look at the erection of the churches of Macedonia in Philippi, Theſſalonica, and Berea, Acts xvi. and xvii. we ſee nothing of any covenant among them, but the New Covenant or Teſtament, the goſpel preached to them by the apoſtles,

apoſtles, which came to them in power, and they believed it, and obeyed it, in the face of an adverſe magiſtracy and mobility, ſo that they received the word in much affliction; and this continued, as the epiſtles to them inform us, Phil. i 27.——30. 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. 2 Theſſ. i. 4. And they were not ſuffering for any worldly kingdom, nor animated in their ſufferings by any hope, but the hope of reſt and glory with Chriſt at his coming, and his kingdom, 2 Theſſ. i. 5.——10. Yea, the Apoſtle tells us, they were "in a great trial of affliction," when they did this notable deed of charity, and not only ſo, but in "deep poverty;" and therefore in the worſt ſituation in the world for working up a national covenant; but, inſtead of projecting any thing like this, they were very forward to make themſelves yet poorer, for the relief of the ſaints in another nation, thus purſuing, to their power, the deſign of the Lord's exhortation, Luke xii. 29.——34. which we called you before to conſider as no way agreeable to the deſign of a nation or kingdom of this world.

There is not the leaſt inſinuation, that the churches of Macedonia were one national church united in a common council of elders ruling over them: for the apoſtle calls them ſtill the churches of Macedonia; and they were as far from being the bulk of the people of that country, as their practice was from being ſuited to the ſtate of it. When we narrowly conſider the frame and ſituation of theſe, and all the other churches in the New Teſtament, with all that is ſaid there of their practice, we have the juſteſt ground to fear their way has been expreſsly abjured, under the name of Independency in ſome of the national engagements to which you ſtand bearing witneſs.

Having thus laid our difficulties before you, we beſeech you to take them to your moſt ſerious conſideration, and do your beſt in the way that ſhall ſeem to you moſt proper to ſatisfy us; and we likewiſe crave you may conſider the pamphlet, intitled, *A ſupplement to Mr Erſkine's ſermon*, with that intitled, *The right of the Chriſtian people, and the three directions for reformation there propoſed*; becauſe, if no fault be found in them, they ſeem to point out a far ſhorter and plainer way of reformation to Chriſt's people, in all times and places, according to his word, than the way of national covenants.

If the difficulties, which we own have ſome weight with us, ſeem light in your eyes, you can the more eaſily remove

them; and we hope you will not diſdain to do an eaſy thing for the relief of ſuch as you are ready to lament, as labouring under the power of error; but if you cannot, or will not, give us any ſatisfaction in this matter, you cannot blame us if we diſſent from you, and ſtand to the beſt light we can have from the teſtimony of Jeſus againſt you.

JOHN GLAS.
JAMES CANT.
GEORGE MILLER.
ROBERT SANDEMAN.

A DIALOGUE upon the Petition.

J. C. IT ſeems we ſhall get no anſwer to our petition.

J. G. Did you expect any but ſuch as you have in the *judicial teſtimony?*

J. C. I ſee none in that teſtimony. It is true, they beſtow a few words in teſtifying againſt the ſectarians, for allowing the power of the keys to the community of the faithful. And in this ſome of the moſt able defenders of Preſbytery are teſtified againſt as ſectarians; yea, if I miſtake not, the famous Gilleſpie * was ſuch a ſectarian. But as to our petition, it would ſeem every thing is avoided that might appear to have the leaſt reference to it. Yet, I muſt own, I expected they would not think it below them to offer what they had to ſay from the ſcripture, againſt our exceptions to their arguments for national covenants. Our Lord even anſwered Satan, "It is written again," and condeſcended to reply to the pitiful objections of the gain-ſaying Jews.

R. S. To what purpoſe would they give themſelves the trouble of reconciling theſe covenants with the objected texts of ſcripture, while their people are as firmly perſuaded of the divine authority of them, as of the bible itſelf; and, for ought I ſee, upon the ſame grounds? The people who wanted the judicial teſtimony as a prop to their faith, in this day of defection from that ſort of faith, will reſt ſatisfied, to find ſuch men as the petitioners, ſtanding in the teſtimony, with the odious (though very ancient †) name *Sectarian*, faſtened upon them *in a judicial way.*

G. M. And they have nothing to fear from the objections againſt the covenants, as to others who incline not to deny the covenants, for fear of the people, while the faſhionable wits, who pretend to think freely, will not beſtow a thought on ſuch a controverſy. A diſpute of ſome greater moment fills their heads.

J. C. It ſeems you think the Aſſociate Preſbytery teſtify only the voice of the people, as if they were their ambaſſadors; and inſinuate, that they regard not ſo much what is

* Diſpute againſt the Engliſh Popiſh ceremonies, part 3. dig. 1. and 4.

† Acts xiv. 5. 14. and xxviii. 22.

true,

true, as what will go cleverly down; and look on ſcriptural arguments brought againſt them, juſt according as they reckon they will take with the world. I confeſs this is no exceſs of charity for them.

R. S. They may ſtill be minding truth, and perhaps only differ in the way of coming at it. You perſuade us to ſee the truth of the ſcriptures, and the ſenſe of them, with our own eyes; but every man that is zealous for truth, goes not this way to work. The Roman Catholics, who would burn men for their truth's ſake, believe as the church believes.

G. M. Nor is that confined to the Papiſts; very firm Proteſtants find out their truth by the majority of voices of orthodox commentators and divines; and ſome never queſtion, that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

J. C. I ſhall not deny that the tradition of the elders, and the approbation of the multitude, hardens them againſt all objections that can be brought to them from the ſcriptures. But I cannot help thinking, that their ſolemn ſilent diſdain of our objections, may even be a cover for weakneſs: for it would be hard to think, that they find themſelves capable to anſwer them, and yet will not do it.

J. G. You are going too faſt, upon the ſuppoſition that nothing has been anſwered to the petition, which may prove a miſtake: for as they were left to anſwer it in the way that ſhould ſeem to them moſt proper, I have heard that the exception to the third argument, from Rev. xi. has been refuted from the pulpit by the "Declarer and detector of ſectarian "errors."

R. S. Yes; they ſay our profeſſor of divinity, who had before boaſted in that argument as invincible, has been crying out againſt the deluſion of putting off the reign of the ſaints till the coming of Chriſt to judgment, and till the reſurrection.

J. C. But did he confute that deluſion, as he calls it, by the ſcripture, or only make a bold aſſertion, and raiſe a ſtrong cry againſt it, as uſual?

J. G. I ſuppoſe he uſes to back his aſſertions with quotations of ſcripture; and, according to his ordinary way of citing it in proof of what he ſays, he needs be in no ſtrait.

R. S. What think you then of this text? "In my fa-"ther's houſe are many manſions; I go to prepare a place "for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will "come again, and receive you to myſelf, that where I am "there ye may be alſo."

G. M.

G. M. And what is that to the purpose? or what would he make of as many texts as can be cited, to shew, that the Lord and his people will meet at his coming, and never more be separated?

J. G. This must be it, That as Christ went to heaven to prepare a place for them, they must be instantly taken up into heaven, when he comes again, and not stay to reign with him on the earth.

G. M. We must suppose, then, they are not to stay to judge the world, or that the judgment is to be at an end in twenty four hours. Whereas Peter, when speaking of that "day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men," says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one "DAY is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thou- "sand years as ONE DAY*."

J. C. I would fain know what the Professor will say of the New Jerusalem (which is now above, where Christ is) "coming down from God out of heaven." Will not the saints possess "the beloved city†" when it comes down? Or, is it his opinion, that it will come from heaven to be instantly taken up again?

R. S. What he will say to that, I cannot pretend to guess, till I see what Durham says of it; but, in the New Testament, I find the great day of judgment, wherein the church will appear with Christ in glory, called "the times of resti- "tution of all things‡", even as the gospel-day is called "the times of refreshing". And why may not he allow the thousand years of the saints reign on the earth to be the first of these times of restitution?

J. G. It is most certain, from John xiv. 2. and 3. and 1 Thess. iv. 16. 17. the saints will never be separated from him, after they are gathered to him, at "his appearing, and "his kingdom;" but that they will instantly go to reside in the third heaven, where he now is, would be a very wide inference from these texts.

W. C. Your professor of divinity cites scripture, I think, very much after the manner of our Quakers, and not much less against the scope of it than they, when they speak of the *light within*, as the great thing pointed at in the Bible.

R. S. I never much troubled my head with that jugling story of the Quakers *light within*; and, to the best of my uptake, they seem to be covered Deists. But how come you

* 2 Pet. iii. 7. 8. † Rev. xx. 9. ‡ Acts iii. 19. 21.

to

to claſs our profeſſor with your Quakers, as citing ſcripture againſt the plain ſcope of it?

W. C. Becauſe he either, with the Quakers, allegoriſes the ſcriptures that ſpeak of the reſurrection of the body, and the reign of the ſaints in their reſtored ſtate, into the ſpiritual reſurrection of the ſoul from ſin, and the inward reign. ———

R. S. He is more ſet on temporals and outwards, I dare ſay, than to confine it there.

W. C. —— Or elſe, as you are inſinuating, he means to ſhew, that the ſcriptures point out a reign on the earth for the ſaints in their mortal ſtate, having all heretics and perſecutors ſubdued under them. But nothing can be more againſt the whole ſcope of the ſcriptures, which teſtify "the "ſufferings of Chriſt, and the following glory," and ſhew us the inſeparable connection betwixt "ſuffering with him" in this life, and "reigning with him" in the life to come. And there can be no doctrine more fitly contrived than this of your profeſſor, to divert Chriſtians from ſeeking after fellowſhip with Chriſt in his ſufferings, and conformity to his death, and to move them away from the lively hope of likeneſs to him in his reſurrection.

Now, if he will not have the ſaints to be "companions "in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt" in this life while they are preſerved under the "trial of faith, unto his "heavenly kingdom", but will inſiſt for an earthly kingdom to them, let him do it; only why ſhould it plead a foundation in the ſcriptures more than our Quakers light within?

And as to what you ſay of temporals and outwards, notwithſtanding their vizard of ſpirituality, they can reconcile God and this world, in their own way, as well as he is able to do in his.

R. S. At this rate, you would make a great many Quakers. But whatever be in this, I am perſuaded the modern opinions concerning the reign of the ſaints on the earth, differ widely from the faith which the firſt ſuffering Chriſtians had of the reign of all the elect with Chriſt in the great day of judgment; and theſe opinions are, in my view, as oppoſite to the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity as Antichriſt is to Chriſt.

J. C. When the kingdom of Antichriſt came, they laid aſide the doctrine of the firſt reſurrection, and the reign of the juſt, wherewith the firſt Chriſtians comforted themſelves under their ſufferings, together with the doctrine of the neceſſary

neceſſary connection between ſuffering with Chriſt in this life, and reigning with him in the life to come: for, indeed, it was quite inconſiſtent with their kingdom, as being a great mean of comfort againſt it. And to make the kingdoms of this world Chriſt's, in any other way than they became his in the time of the apoſtles, or to plead for a dominion of the ſaints over them, before the "reſurrection of the juſt," is perfectly Antichriſtian."

D. S. The ſtrength of the brethrens teſtimony lies in the word *judicial*; and the force of their argument againſt us muſt be in the word *ſectarian*. And when I ſpeak what I read in the ſcripture, of the firſt reſurrection, and reign of the ſaints, I am confuted by the word *Millenarian*. I confeſs I am at a great loſs with this way of reaſoning: for I can neither be convinced by what I do not underſtand, nor am I capable to make any reply to it.

R. S. If you were one of the profeſſor's ſtudents, you would get an account of all the condemned erroneous opinions, contrary to the orthodox ſtandards, diſtinguiſhed by their proper names, as *Nevatian*, *Audean*, *Arian*, *Eutychean*, *Neſtorian*, *Pelagian*, *Arminian*, *Baxterian*, *Cocceian*, *Eraſtian*, and the like. Theſe would ſerve as beacons to keep you in the orthodox courſe; and if you ſhould find ſcripture pleaded for any opinion new to you, becauſe not in your ſtandards, you needed only think to which of the condemned errors, on the right or left hand, it might be referred; and then confute it, by lifting up your hands, crying, O flat Arminianiſm! or Cocceianiſm! or Baxterianiſm! or (with ſome leſs abhorrence, becauſe it is on the right hand) even Antinomianiſm! Or you might expreſs yourſelf in this manner, This is a *dangerous*, *ſectarian*, or *Millenarian*, or *Latitudinarian* error.

D. S. But I wonder that I hear of no —— *ITES*. Are there no errors marked that way?

R. S. There's no lack of —— *ITES*; as, the *Ebionites* and *Elceſaites*; and among the Gnoſtics, the *Cainites* and the *Ophites*: then you have the *Marcionites*, very famous: then the *Encratites* and the *Apotactites*. And among the Montaniſts, the *Taſcodrugites* and *Paſſalorynchites*. Theſe are —— *ITES* for you. And you have likewiſe the *Antidicomarianites*, or, if you like a ſhorter word, the *Euchites*.——

D. S. —— If you be not coining theſe words, you have certainly taken them off ſome apothecary's pots or ſhuttles,

and are palming them on me for the names of heretics. You may just as well say *Ipecacuanhaites*.

R. S. No, truly. I own I am in good humour; but I assure you there are such names in the lists of heretics. They may indeed appear frightful to you at first; but let not that discourage you. In a little time, you will find them as familiar as the names of the drugs to the keeper of an apothecary's shop.

D. S. But, in earnest, I see nothing I could propose by this study, if it were not to make myself a sort of a bully in divinity, to fright poor people with words and names. I'll do better to steer my course by my Bible, and notice the beacons set up there. And I am sure I shall have the testimony of every man's conscience who really believes the Bible, that this is the safest course.

R. S. But not so easy as the other.

D. S. I like ease very well; but I fear that study would ease me of searching the scriptures, and of dependence on Christ as his disciple, to bring me under the yoke of human authority, and subject my faith to the dictates of the clergy about truth and error.

Yet, seeing you have got into an odd humour about words and names, I shall be content to hear you upon a word you have not yet mentioned, because it is taken to imply some truth that the professor has been saying out of the pulpit we have the impudence to deny.

R. S. Pray what word is that?

D. S. If I mind well, it is *specifically*, or if I have heard right.

R. S. A very proper word for a professor of divinity. But what use made he of it, or was he finding fault with us that we did not use that glorious word *specifically?*

D. S. No. He says we sectarians deny that the church of the Old Testament was *specifically* the same with the New-Testament church.

J. G. And we may take this as the answer of our exception against the first argument for national covenants.

R. S. Very probably: For such of his people as understand not this mytaphysical term, will be ready to imagine a *sameness* of the Old and New Testament church, when no other argument can evidence it.

D. S. But what means the word *specifically?*

R. S. You must learn your logics and metaphysics before you fathom the deep sense of that mighty word.

J. G.

J. G. You may explain it to him by examples.

R. S. Then I must explain *generically* and *numerically*, as well as *specifically*.

D. S. I pray you, one of these terms of the clergy's trade at once. I have no mind to their business; and I fear I have not head enough for any one of this *sort* of words.

R. S. You have explained it already yourself.

D. S. You are diverting yourself with my ignorance. How have I explained a word I do not understand?

R. S. We deny that the church of the Old Testament was of the same sort with the New-Testament church; just as you say, These peculiar words that you call the terms of the clergy's trade are not of the same *sort* with common words. You own them to be *generically* the same, as they are *words*; but you make them *specifically* different, when you call them another *sort* of *words*.

D. S. And is this the mystery of *specifically?* Then I have no fear of it: for the scripture makes not the Old-Testament church and the New of the same sort. I am sure *flesh* and *spirit*, *earthly* and *heavenly*, are not of the same sort; that is, say you, not *specifically* the same. Is not this the meaning of *specifically?*

R. S. I think so. But the professor would have you own them to be of the same *sort*, and no more different than the church of Antioch and the church of Corinth, two churches of the same *sort*. And so he allows you to deny them to be *numerically* the same, but not *specifically*.

D. S. He may say too, that the church in Corinth differs no more from the church of the first-born, than it does from the church in Antioch.

And if he will have all churches to be of the same *sort*, I shall be evens with him for once: I'll say there is indeed no other church but one; and, if he pleases, he may call it *numerically* one.

R. S. And what make you then of the church of the Old Testament?

D. S. That church was a shadow of the only true church to come, whereof Jesus Christ is the builder; as it is said, "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for "a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after, "but Christ as a Son, over his own house; whose house are "we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of "the hope firm unto the end *".

* Heb. iii. 5. 6

R. S. What say you then of the Old-Testament saints?

D. S. I say, the saints of the New Testament are now builded together with them, into the only true church, that is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, "Jesus Christ himself (the first-begotten of the dead) being "the chief corner-stone *".

R. S. And what will you make of all the churches you read of in the New Testament?

D. S. Each of them is a lively representation of the only true church, as they "also are builded together in him for "an habitation of God through the Spirit †".

R. S. Why then call you them and old Israel *churches*, seeing there is but one true church?

D. S. Even as I call the types of Christ's sacrifice, *sacrifices*; and as I call that bread and cup in the Lord's supper his *body* and *blood*.

R. S. Now I have drawn out your whole *error*. For thus you deny the Old Testament church and the New to be *specifically* the same; and thus you set aside the *Catholic visible church*, which you ought to distinguish from the *invisible*.

D. S. Hear me then. I own that the only true church, and its communion in Christ, as one body, is visible in every church of the saints, having communion in that one bread, and that one cup ‡.

I own again, that there is one visible rule for all churches, in all nations, without difference, *viz.* the Bible; and the church that comes nearest to that rule, is the most catholic church.

And again, I distinguish any such visible church from the true invisible catholic, as the *sign* from the thing *signified*.

Now tell me, if you can, what more the professor would have. Would he have me to be a Roman Catholic?

R. S. Say a Scottish Catholic; for that is what he would have. He wants you to own the covenanted church of Scotland to be of the same sort with the covenanted church of Israel.

G. M. But I fear he cannot even grant him that favour, till he see that the nation of Scotland sprang from a promise of God, as Israel from the promise made to Abraham; and till he be sure, that God made a covenant with the nation of

* Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.; Col. i. 18. † Eph. ii. 22.
‡ 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. 18.

Scotland,

Scotland, according to the covenant that he made with Iſrael, when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt; yea, till he underſtand that Chriſt is to come of Scotland, according to the fleſh, as he was to come of the nation of Iſrael.

D. S. That is what I hope I will never ſee. But if I owned the covenanted church of Scotland to be of the ſame ſort with that of Iſrael, I behoved then to deny it to be catholic.

R. S. As how?

D. S. The covenanted church of Iſrael was a nation of this earth, ſeparated from all other nations to God, as his kingdom, and poſſeſſing a ſpot of the earth as their proper inheritance. But a church of the New Teſtament is a people whom God takes out of any nation, without difference, for his name, and who ſojourn in any country of the world, as ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth. This is catholic. But is there any charm in the word *ſpecifically*, to make this of the ſame ſort with the national church of Iſrael?

R. S. Still you miſtake him. He would have all the nations of the world brought into the ſolemn league and covenant, and ſubjected to the aſſociated preſbytery that bears teſtimony to that covenant. And when that is, there will be a catholic church, *ſpecifically* the ſame with all the nations of the world, proſelyted into the church of Iſrael.

D. S. Say rather, ſpecifically the ſame with the Jewiſh notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom. Say, ſpecifically the ſame with the Roman Catholic, which anſwers to the city where our Lord was crucified.

R. S. You may repreſent the profeſſor as ridiculous to yourſelf as you pleaſe, and give his church all the ill names that the Revelation gives to Antichriſt; but it is far below him to diſpute with you.

G. M. And they who believe his judicial teſtimony will be ſure to look on all that ſpeak againſt his doctrine as dogs barking at the moon.

J. C. So much, then, for barking at the moon.

A SUPPLEMENT to Mr EBENEZER ERSKINE's Synodical Sermon.

[First published in the year 1732.]

AFter many loud complaints of the evils and corruptions of the day we live in, have been made to no purpose; because that which lay at the bottom of them was not found out, and before that no effectual remedy could be proposed; Mr Erskine has at length made a discovery in his synodical sermon, that deserves some consideration from them that are not satisfied in a zealous indolence, always complaining and doing nothing; but want to be directed into the course they ought to take for reforming these evils and corruptions. His words are, *Syn. Serm.* p. 26. "I am persua-"ded, that carnal notions of the kingdom of Christ, which "is not of this world, lie at the bottom of many of the evils "and corruptions of the day we live in." This is but a hint; and it were to be wished, that he himself had taken time to lay open the grounds of his persuasion, even though he had thereby prevented himself as to some things that follow in the sermon. But seeing it is not probable, that he will do this so quickly as the evils and corruptions call for a remedy, it should not offend him, that his thought is pursued by another that is of the same persuasion with him in this matter. And while this is done, it is necessary, that the scope of his sermon should be attended to as far as is consistent with the proposition that is proposed to be illustrated.

It comes in upon the reasons he gives, why the Jewish builders rejected Christ, p. 25. 26. where he says, 1. "This "fatal error of theirs proceeded from their ignorance of "Christ in the excellency of his person, and of the glorious "mystery of redemption and salvation through him, Acts iii. "17. 1 Cor. ii. 7. 8. They were men of no despicable parts, "capable enough to toss an argument; they thought them-"selves the only seers in Israel in their day; *Are we blind "also?* Yet Christ declares them blind like moles in things "relating to his kingdom. The least of Christ's babes, whom "they reckoned among the accursed mob, had more of the "saving knowledge of God, and of the things of God, than "they;

" they; and the blind leading the blind, both ſtumbled on the " ſtumbling ſtone, and fell into the ditch together. 2. Miſta- " ken notions of the nature of the Meſſiah's kingdom was an- " other cauſe of their rejecting this precious ſtone. They " had formed a notion to themſelves, without any real ground " from ſcripture-prophecy, that the Meſſiah was to appear " in the form of an earthly monarch, and that he was to lift " up the head of the Jewiſh nation, and make the Romans, " and all the nations of the world their vaſſals and tributa- " ries; but finding themſelves miſtaken, they diſown and " crucify him as an impoſtor; which, by the by, ſerves to " diſcover what a dangerous thing it is not to have right con- " ceptions of the ſpiritual nature of Chriſt's kingdom." Having thus far introduced himſelf to the ſubject by the Jewiſh builders, and declared the danger of wrong conceptions of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, he ſolemnly applies what he had been ſaying of the Jewiſh builders to this day, in the remarkable words before noted. And by the ſame rule it is applicable to any day wherein Chriſtianity is corrupted: for it is of the corruptions of Chriſtianity that he is ſpeaking. The corruption of Chriſtianity has ſucceeded in the room of the corruption of the Jewiſh church, which was chiefly owing to the builders. And from thence the rejection of Chriſt, in his miniſters and people, in his truths and the profeſſion of his name, as the Prophet, Prieſt, and King of his church, has proceeded, even as the rejection of Chriſt himſelf flowed from the corruption of religion among the Jews: And both had their riſe from a miſtaken notion of Chriſt's kingdom as ſet forth in the prophecies. Thus far we have Mr Erſkine. But 'tis pity he did not go farther than merely to point out the way. However, keeping his direction in view, and minding the warning he has given of danger in miſtaking the nature of Chriſt's kingdom: Let us go on to conſider, firſt, How the Jewiſh builders that dealt ſo much in the Old-Teſtament prophecies, and explained them to the people, came to form ſuch a notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and next, By a ſuitable application of this to ſome of the corruptions of the day we live in, what he ſays of the cauſe of the evils and corruptions of the day, may appear with ſome evidence to them that want to know the truth in this matter.

As to the firſt, Mr Erſkine ſays, It was without any real ground from ſcripture-prophecy, that they formed that carnal notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom to themſelves; and when he ſays, there was no real ground, he does not deny, but rather

ther insinuate, that there was some appearance of a ground for their notion of the Messiah's kingdom in the prophecies. And so there was: so it behoved to be. The prophecies of the Messiah, and his kingdom behoved to be involved in figures: otherwise they could not have have been fulfilled by men professing to believe them, as they were fulfilled by the Jews. Even as the New-Testament prophecy concerning Antichrist could never have been fulfilled by men professing to believe the New Testament, if it had been spoken plainly, and without any proverb. God set up the kingdom of David in the prophecies, as a figure of the kingdom of Christ, and spake of it accordingly. The kingdom of heaven is a mystery, the hidden sense of a figure; and it has many such mysteries, which the Jewish builders were not made to know. They did not know the wisdom of God in a mystery; and so they took up with the figure, and neglected the hidden sense. Yea, it was not so easy for them to perceive it as it is for them that have the New-Testament revelation, making these things very clear that were dark unto the prophets themselves: and therefore they are yet more inexcusable than the Jewish builders, who have the New-Testament revelation complete, and profess to believe it, and yet entertain carnal notions of the kingdom of Christ. Not only the Jewish builders, but our Lord's disciples, in the days of his flesh, while he was speaking parables, and before he ascended to the throne of his kingdom, and poured down the Holy Ghost, to make the New-Testament revelation full and clear, understood the prophecies of a worldly kingdom. But after the New Testament revelation, the only infallible explication of the Old, is completed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, it is more criminal in them that profess to believe it, to imagine still, that, according to scripture-prophecy, Christ's kingdom must be some way of this world. And Mr Erskine believes there are some such imaginations in the minds of Christians at this day, when he is persuaded, that carnal notions of the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, lie at the bottom of the corruptions of the day. The Jewish builders, according to the view they had of the prophecies, which yet had not a real ground in them, imagined, that the Messiah was to sit on David's earthly throne, which the New Testament makes the figure of the heavenly; but Christians, so called, set the kings of Europe on that throne, even as the Christian builders in the days of Constantine set him on that throne: and in this the Jewish builders had plainly the better

ter of Chriſtians, according to the prophecies; for they gave David's throne to the Meſſiah that they were looking for. The expectation that ſome have of a temporal reign of the Jews in their old land, when once they are converted in a national way, and that in their land will be the viſible ſeat of Chriſt's kingdom over all the world, before his ſecond coming, is very like the notion that the Jewiſh builders had of the Old Teſtament prophecies; and they that think they have a real ground in the prophecies for ſuch expectations, need not be ſurpriſed at the great blunder that the Jewiſh builders committed in explaining the prophecies. If we conſider the application that ſome make of the prophecies touching Chriſt's kingdom to Scotland, we cannot be ſurpriſed at the application that the Jewiſh builders made of them to the land of the Jews: for it is manifeſt, that, by the ſtyle of the prophets, the Jewiſh application had ſome way the advantage. And if there was enough ſaid in the prophecies to confute the Jewiſh notion of them, and to render them inexcuſable in rejecting the kingdom of Chriſt in the appearance it made to them, much more are they without excuſe by theſe prophecies who have and own the New Teſtament that explains them.

This ſenſe of the prophecies was the more agreeable to them, that it flattered their pride, and did not remarkably croſs any of their worldly luſts; but rather made way for the hopes of getting them fulfilled. This gave it a vaſt advantage in their carnal minds, and in the minds of the people, over the ſenſe of the prophecies that our Lord and his apoſtles contended for. This made them overlook every thing in the prophecies that ſeemed to croſs this carnal ſenſe of them, or reconcile it the beſt way they could with this ſenſe. Yea, with what difficulty were the diſciples at firſt perſuaded to give up with this carnal ſenſe of ſcripture-prophecy, and embrace the ſpiritual one? It required that mortification to the world and heavenlineſs of mind, that was wrought in them by the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, to reconcile them to the true interpretation of the prophets.

But the ſenſe of the ſcripture-prophecy that did not bear ſo hard on mens luſts as our Lord's interpretation of them did, was not maintained by the Jewiſh builders without a zeal of God and his worſhip and ſervice. They ſhewed the greateſt zeal for the law of Moſes, and for the glory of God, as the author of the Old-Teſtament revelation, in contending for their ſenſe of the prophecies againſt Chriſt, and in re-

jecting him and his ſpiritual heavenly kingdom. They did not imagine, that, in the kingdom of their Meſſiah, wickedneſs and profanity was to take place; very far from it: they expected he would reform the corruptions that were complained of among them; and that, in exalting their nation, he would revive and confirm the covenant made with their nation on Sinai, in all the articles of it, and eſtabliſh the law of Moſes over all nations who were to be bleſſed in the obſervation of that law, and in coming within the bond of that covenant, at the ſame time that they came in ſubjection to the Jewiſh nation. And in this they had by far the advantage of any of them that now profeſs the greateſt zeal for national covenants, or any national form of a church, that can pretend to no more of an intereſt in divine inſtitution, but as they are a copying after that national covenant and church which the Jewiſh builders oppoſed to the kingdom of Chriſt, that was the end of that covenant and church; and can pretend to no other divine inſtitution, but ſuch a ſenſe of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament as that whereby the Jewiſh builders rejected Chriſt and his kingdom.

Though this ſeems plainly inconſiſtent with ſome part of Mr Erſkine's ſermon, yet it agrees not ill with a private letter of his ſome time ago publiſhed, and is perfectly conſiſtent with the ſenſe and true ſcope of the paſſage in the ſermon that was propoſed in the beginning to be illuſtrated. And it has likewiſe ſome countenance from another part of the ſermon, where he ſays, p. 36. inference 6. "See from what is ſaid "what it is makes a flouriſhing church. It is not her exter-"nal peace and plenty or proſperity, not her connection in "politics with kings or parliaments, patrons, heritors, or "any other ſet of men: but her connection with the chief "corner ſtone. This, and this only, is what beautifies the "whole building, and makes her increaſe with the increaſe of "God." It will not be very eaſy to declare how far a national church and covenant, and ſhutting the door unto places of civil or military truſt on ſuch as are not well affected to that church and covenant, can take place without ſome connection in politics with kings and parliaments, or with the legiſlative civil power. And, ſeeing this connection at leaſt adds nothing to the beauty of the building, there can be no real loſs in dropping it, that we may give ourſelves wholly to the maintenance of the connection with the chief corner-ſtone, which alone beautifies the building, and makes the church increaſe with the increaſe of God. The natural tendency of

a national covenant and a national church, depending on that connection with kings, parliaments, and armies, is external peace, by the deſtruction of ſects, plenty or riches to the clergy of that church, and worldly proſperity; which, Mr Erſkine ſays, is far from being that which makes a flouriſhing church. And he reckons that the increaſe of the church that comes that way is not the increaſe of God; that only is with him the increaſe of God that comes by holding the head, which was the kind of increaſe before any king or kingdom of this world owned Chriſtianity.

Here is a queſtion, If there be any real ground in ſcripture-prophecy for this ſenſe of the words of the prophets, that the nations of this world are to be churches, and in covenant with God as Iſrael was? And the Apoſtle James ſeems to determine it, in that ſpeech he made Acts xv. in the church in Jeruſalem, to which the other apoſtles and the elders of that church, with that whole church, agreed; he ſays, "Si-"meon hath declared how God at the firſt did viſit the na-"tions to take out of them a people for his name, and to "this agree the words of the prophets." If we conſider theſe words with the words that follow, we cannot be at a loſs to underſtand the Holy Ghoſt's ſenſe of his own words in the ſcripture-prophecy, when he ſpeaks of the nations being brought into the church, and called by God's name, or having his name called on them; and among all the private interpretations and different ſentiments of men about what it is that the words of the prophets agree to about the nations, this is the mind of the Holy Ghoſt, the inſpirer of the prophets. We may alſo ſee from that context, that the kingdom of Chriſt, as it ſtood when James made that ſpeech, was the antitype of the kingdom of David: and that the ſubjects of that kingdom were but a remnant of the Jewiſh nation, and a remnant of every other nation where he had any ſubjects. This is Chriſt's kingdom, his church, of which the prophets ſpake; and for this ſenſe of the prophets, the apoſtles contended againſt ſuch as would not admit the nations upon whom God's name was called into the church, without the Jewiſh national covenant.

Another reaſon of the miſtake of the Jewiſh builders about the Meſſiah's kingdom ſpoken of in the prophets was, that they took not the ſcripture by itſelf to compare it with Chriſt's doctrine, but according to the tradition of their fathers. And the tradition of the fathers about the Meſſiah's kingdom being more agreeable to their worldly luſts, where-

with their zeal for their religion was not inconſiſtent, than Chriſt's doctrine was; this, with the high eſteem they had of theſe fathers, laid them under ſuch a byaſs againſt Chriſt's kingdom, which is not of this world, as nothing but the power of God's grace could conquer. The gratifying of their pride and other luſts, in a connection with zeal for their religion, and the authority of their worthy anceſtors, whoſe greatneſs and goodneſs, and capacity to underſtand the prophecies, it was not lawful to call in queſtion, made up a three-fold cord not eaſily to be broken.

And thus were Jewiſh builders led into that fatal carnal notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom, wherewith our Lord's appearance and doctrine was ſo inconſiſtent, that they could not bear it, but rejected him. They could not endure a Meſſiah deſtitute of worldly honour and wealth, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, a pattern of ſelf denial in all reſpects, and calling all his followers to deny themſelves, and take up their croſs and follow him, and, inſtead of a worldly kingdom, telling them of the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom not coming with obſervation, a kingdom within men, and a kingdom that they could have no part in by virtue of that birth of which they boaſted as they were the ſeed of Abraham, and which gave them a part in the Old-Teſtament kingdom, unleſs they ſhould be born again of the Spirit, born from above; and, inſtead of theſe great things they were looking for on earth by the Meſſiah, promiſing nothing in this world without perſecution, and raiſing mens expectations from this world to the world to come. This was as alien from the Jewiſh ſenſe of the prophecies, as the following queſtions are alien from the prophecies and the New-Teſtament ſenſe of them, *viz.* Whether theſe called *malignants* ſhould have places of truſt civil or military? Whether a national church ſhould be governed by a ſubordination of courts, compoſed of preſbyters acting in parity, or alſo by a ſubordination of officers? and, Whether the national clergy ſhould manage the king and parliament, *&c.* or the king and parliament manage them? And there has been as much zeal as the Jews could boaſt of ſpent upon theſe ſame queſtions.

Now, as the carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom lay at the bottom of the rejection of our Lord by the Jewiſh builders, ſo, thinks Mr Erſkine, lies it at the bottom of the rejection of Chriſt in the day we live in. And, when we come to the application of what has been ſaid of the Jewiſh builders unto the evils and corruptions of the day we live in, it is needleſs

to

to go further than that inſtance that gave occaſion to all the zeal expreſſed in the ſermon; which is, the depriving of the Chriſtian people of their right of chuſing their own paſtors, by the late act of aſſembly, whereby it is put in the hands of heritors, many of them diſaffected to the church, and of elders or repreſentatives of the people, the majority of both together; and this, together with patronages, by law eſtabliſhed, which the church calls a grievance, and yet ſubmits.

Mr Erſkine is of the mind, that a carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom lies at the bottom of this evil and corruption of the day we live in; but how? is indeed the queſtion; which, till he do it to better purpoſe himſelf, muſt be anſwered by way of inference from the hints he has given. And how ſhould this evil come, but by the church's connection in politics with the powers of the earth, that ſerves unto the external peace, plenty, and proſperity of the church? This connection began in the days of Conſtantine, when the man of ſin was brought forth. The churches had been pregnant with this conception of iniquity before; but then it was brought forth, and from thence nurſed up by the Chriſtian emperors, till the Roman empire was broke into ten kingdoms, and yet remained united in the one clergy when the man of ſin, being come to age, ſat down on his throne, and began to have poſſeſſion of the ſuperiority over the nations, in the bounds of the Roman empire, that the rulers of the empire had before.

In the days of Conſtantine, the Chriſtian builders, ſeeing a door opened for worldly honour, riches, and eaſe, and forgetting the old doctrine of ſelf-denial, mortification to the world, and of the ſpiritual heavenly nature of Chriſt's kingdom, which they could not but think of under the croſs, began to inſiſt on the old Jewiſh ſenſe of the prophecies, and to compliment Conſtantine, a Chriſtian catechumen, with David's throne, and ſo to call upon him to act ſuch a part about the church, as the good kings of Judah did about the temple: and the good man accepted the compliment, complied with the exhortation of his teachers, and thought he could not do too much for the church, to make her flouriſh with external peace, plenty, and proſperity; and that was all that was in his power.

The Chriſtian builders had men of divers occupations profeſſing Chriſtianity before; but they never imagined, that the profeſſion of Chriſtianity made any further change in theſe occupations,

cupations, than to make the men more upright and self-denied in them: so that there was no difference betwixt a Heathenish and a Christian physician or mechanic, but in the principles and ends of their actions in these occupations. But they made another kind of distinction betwixt a magistrate and a Christian magistrate. He had such duties incumbent on him as the kings of Judah had, about the worship of God; as, to cut off heretics and schismatics, to establish Christianity as the religion of the empire, in the room of Heatheniſm, and to suffer the open exercise of no other religion, and to make provision for the maintenance of the clergy.

When such duties were incumbent on the Christian magistrate, and such services to be done by him, he behoved to have some privileges connected with these services. The nature of the thing required it; yea it was not disagreeable to the nature of the Christian law, that always connects privileges with services: so that if Christ's law required these services of the magistrate, and if the New Testament made him the executer of the laws of Christ, it is very peculiar, if it granted him therewith no privilege. It is certain, at least, it was not so in the case of the kings of Judah.

When the earth helped the woman at the Reformation, or when some of the powers of Europe interposed, no doubt with political views, to stem the tide of Romish persecution, the preachers and professors of the gospel, being thus eased, began to do the same thing with the kings and princes of the earth, that the ancients did with Constantine, and required of these kings and states, that there should be a legal provision for the maintenance of the ministers set in the room of the parish-priests; and this after the church-lands had been alienated. It was, no doubt, every way reasonable, that, in consequence of this, the legislative power of the state should have something to say, as to these that should enjoy that maintenance which the law provided.

The connection of the church with the powers of the earth, could not but make a different outward state of the church from that which was before there was any such connection, and produce effects, that all the influence of the gospel, and the ablest ministers of it, and the connection of the church with the corner stone, did not produce before. For it made the people of the nations come into a profession of Christianity, not of free choice, nor by the influence of the gospel itself upon their minds, but by the influence of the powers of the earth. And in consequence of this, the

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moſt of the people born and bred in a country, ſo made and called *Chriſtian*, are Chriſtians the ſame way that people born and bred in a Heatheniſh or Mahometan country, are Heathens or Mahometans. Thus we have heard of a great church, and leſſer churches alſo come of her, and ſeparated from her, boaſting of being the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and the mother of God's children, while, at the ſame time, the moſt of the children appear plainly never to have been begotten by the ſeed of God's word, but by the influence of the kings of the earth, ſtanding in connection with the church. And this is very like what the New Teſtament ſpeaks of the mother of harlots, committing fornication with the kings of the earth. And in conſequence of this, the children of the true church, that appeared to be begotten by the word of God, have been ſeen living with that mother of harlots, and with theſe harlots ſprung of her, and ſeparated from her, as children in the ſame family with that ſpurious brood; yea, and ſo far impoſed on, as to call any of theſe harlots their mother; and yet this is nothing elſe but the daughter of Zion dwelling with the daughter of Babylon. And the Lord's call to them now is to come forth, that they ſhare not in her ſins, and in conſequence of that, of her plagues: for he that ſcattered Iſrael will gather him and feed him as a ſhepherd doth his flock, and bring his ſheep out of all places, where they have been ſcattered in the cloudy and dark Antichriſtian day.

The native conſequence of this conjunction of the church, and the kings of the earth, to bring forth Chriſtians, was ſuch a form of the Chriſtian profeſſion, as is conſiſtent with a viſible denial of the power of it, or ſuch as under which men might viſibly ſeek themſelves, and follow the courſe of this world, and fulfill the luſts thereof, and ſo Chriſtianity become a broad way, wherein all the people of a nation might walk with eaſe, as Chriſt foretold falſe prophets would make it, and not a ſtrait and narrow way, as our Lord and his apoſtles made it: for the nations, peoples, and multitudes, begotten between the church and the kings of the earth, could not walk in that way: The gate was too ſtrait, and the way too narrow for them. And it can be no wonder, to ſee even a great multitude ſtirred up to great zeal for the ſtricteſt form of national Chriſtianity, while others are for a more eaſy form; becauſe the ſtricteſt form of it muſt ſtill be ſo eaſy as to admit of a whole nation under it: and men muſt be fond of a way wherein they may walk with

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ſome eaſe to their luſts, and yet believe they are in the narrow way that leads to eternal life. Though the diſappointment will be hard upon them in the iſſue, yet, in the mean time, it gives their conſciences ſome more eaſe, and it ſoothes their pride too.

Another conſequence of this connection of the church with the powers of the earth, is that which is called the *coercive power of the magiſtrate about the church:* for by the ſame influence behoved the nations to be kept in ſubjection to the national form of Chriſtianity, by which they were at firſt brought under it: and as this was not owing to the influence of the word of the goſpel, ſo neither could the clergy truſt to it for the other. And as if the ſanctions of Chriſt's laws were not ſufficient, and he not ſufficient to make them effectual unto all their ends, the magiſtrate behoved to annex ſanctions of his own to the laws of Chriſt, and ſo make them effectual upon a people that would not be influenced by the ſanctions that Jeſus Chriſt had annexed to his laws: So that the profeſſed ſubjection of theſe people to theſe laws, was not a profeſſion of ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt and his authority, as was the profeſſed ſubjection of men to the goſpel at the firſt; but a profeſſion of ſubjection to the magiſtrate inſtead of Chriſt. Thus Mr Erſkine, in one of his ſermons, cannot be defended from bringing an unrighteous charge againſt theſe potentates, that take upon them to grant a toleration to any doctrine, or any worſhip, inconſiſtent with the doctrine, worſhip, and government, that Chriſt hath inſtituted; when he ranks them among theſe that juſtle Chriſt out of his place, as he on whoſe ſhoulders the government of the church is laid: for if theſe potentates he may mean did otherwiſe, they would then ſtand in his place, and take his government upon their ſhoulders, and rule the fear, or worſhip and ſervice of God, inſtead of him who is the ruler of the fear of God; yea, and bring in their own fear in the room of the fear of God.

By this power of the kings of the earth about theſe national churches, they ſtood adorned with the furniture of the kings of the earth, who alſo ſhielded them in the enjoyment of the privileges that they beſtowed on them, and defended them againſt heretics and ſchiſmatics: whereas Jeſus Chriſt is the ſhield and glory of the true church, that is cloathed with him, and has this world under her feet, and wears the doctrine of his apoſtles as her crown.

And this is alſo another fruit of the connection of the church

church with the kings of the earth, that a church so connected with them laboured under difficulties, in keeping up the pretence of her connection with Jesus Christ, in a consistency with her connection with the legislative powers of the earth, whereby she was established. And no wonder if hereupon should ensue two parties in such a church; some, as their interest led, chusing to insist on the pretence of her connection with Jesus Christ, unto the weakening of the other connection, and others insisting on the real connection with the legislative power that established her, unto the weakening of the other pretended connection; and these that are at the helm in church-courts going this last way, while others, that cannot get into the management, strive to stir up the people the other way. And if they that manage the church should, at any time, insist vehemently on the pretence of connection with Jesus Christ, unto the weakening of the other, it could not miss to produce such convulsions in the nation, as the contention of a man and wife for the pre-eminence makes in a family. But, however it be, this connection of the church and the kings of the earth makes it some way necessary for the members of the church, as such, to be politicians as well as Christians, and to be let into the affairs of the state, as well as into the affairs of the kingdom of heaven.

Further, when, by the legislative power of the nation, the maintenance of the ministers of the church is provided for, and their authority over the people of the nation raised and secured, this must, in the nature of the thing, be an allurement to worldly men to seek into the ministry, that seek nothing but their own honour, gain, and ease, and to lay out themselves for it, as men do for any honourable, gainful, and easy worldly employment. And whatever professions or subscriptions be required of them, when connected with such temporal advantages, these will be complied with by multitudes that have nothing but these advantages in view.

When there are several candidates for the oversight of a parish, and contending parties, there is a necessity for some standing rule to go by, to avoid utter confusion; and this rule must be consistent with the connection betwixt the church and the legislative power of the nation, whereby alone that set of clergy that possesses parishes has the possession of them.

In this case, it is not possible that this stated rule can be agreeable to the rule observed by Christians, when there was

no connection between the church and the powers of the earth, and no worldly advantages secured unto the ministers of the gospel, or connected with the ministry of the word, by the legislative power of any nation of this world, and no maintenance provided for them by any law but the law of Christ that influences only his willing people. And it is easy for the party that finds not this rule calculated for them, to raise a cry against it, as not agreeable to the practice of the first Christians, recorded in scripture, and therefore disagreeable to the law of Christ. But was there a national church and a national covenant, and the coercive power of the magistrate about the church, cutting off heretics, and giving no toleration to any but the right sort of Christians; or, was there a national church by law established among the first Christians? And why then do not these men cry out on these things also, as disagreeable to the kingdom of Christ? The answer is, Ay, but that was the infancy of the church, when there was no Christian magistrate, and so no legal establishment. And this answer will serve in the other case also: so that, if our worldly honour, gain, and ease, will not suffer us to be conformed to that infancy of the church in these things, why will we be conformed to that infancy in this thing, that behoved to alter with the other alterations, and as a consequent of them? But even then, when it is said, the church was in infancy, they that contributed to the maintenance of the pastors chused them; church-members chused them: so that the alteration is at least no greater here than it is in the other things. To tell a man, in those days, that he would be obliged to maintain the teacher, though he had no liberty to chuse his own teacher, would have been then an odd story. And yet we have not heard any outcry or scruple at taking stipend from a disaffected heritor, or raising an augmentation from his estate by law; though the ground of scruple, in this case, be the same as in the other.

As to the liberty of the Christian people, it cannot be said to be more taken away by this act of assembly, than it has been by all the acts and methods of doing about settling parishes that have been in Scotland: for the majority of heads of families destroyed the liberty of the minority, and the greater part of all societies is not always the best, the head of a family representing the family, and yet at last differing from them in his choice, destroyed the liberty of the persons in his family capable to chuse, and perhaps better Christians than himself; and lay-elders representing the people may do

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the ſame. And if a maſter of a family may thus repreſent his ſervant, a better Chriſtian than himſelf, what is the difference, as far as Chriſt's law is concerned, betwixt this and a landlord's repreſenting his tenant? So that unleſs it be reduced to the old conſent of the whole church, (without the lording of any one church-member over another, either as to the receiving or rejecting of a miniſter), when there was no connection between the church and the kings of the earth, and every Chriſtian profeſſed ſubjection to Chriſt in ſupporting his paſtor, it is no great matter which way men be put in pariſhes, and in poſſeſſion of the benefice afforded by law, providing it be ſtill in the greateſt agreeableneſs to the legiſlative power of the nation, and to the connection between that and the national church.

But the ancient Chriſtian liberty remains entire, notwithſtanding patronage, as it now ſtands, and the preſent act of aſſembly: for while they provide teachers for people that would neither chuſe nor maintain them, if left to themſelves, there is nothing in theſe acts, under the preſent government, that offers violence to no man's conſcience, to hinder any that are not ſatisfied with the public teachers to chuſe their own teachers, and contribute to their maintenance, as they chuſe their own phyſicians. But it is far eaſier for the people to make grievous complaints of the want of liberty to chuſe teachers, whoſe maintenance is otherwiſe provided for, without any foundation in the ſcriptures, than to chuſe them, and be at the charge of maintaining them according to the ſcriptures. And it is eaſier for miniſters to be popular, by contending for the liberty of the people, while they enjoy the public maintenance, than to leave their worldly advantages, to ſerve the Chriſtian people in the miniſtry, and live as they are capable to enable them, and on the providence of the head over all things to the church. Though yet, if none of theſe that are bred for the legal maintenance will deny themſelves, and ſerve them in the miniſtry of the word, it is ſtill agreeable to Mr Erſkine's ſermon, that they ſhould chuſe from among themſelves, men not educated for the ſtipends that the law provides, but knowing more of God, and of the things of God, than even the builders that reckon them among the accurſed mob. And theſe may be as eaſily maintained as the firſt Chriſtian elders, before whom Paul ſet himſelf, at the ſame time, as an example of great labour in the miniſtry, and of labour with his hands: and if his example be to be followed by elders, or miniſters of the word,

to the end of the world, in the firſt, why not in the laſt? ſeeing he commends it to elders, and calls them to follow it as well as the other. Thus the people may have their liberty, if they were delivered from that carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom, that has no more real ground in the Old-Teſtament propheſies, than the notion of the Jewiſh builders. This, and no preſent act of parliament or aſſembly, holds them in bondage; and till they be delivered from it, complain as they will, they will never have true liberty to ſerve Chriſt according to the New Teſtament, and follow the footſteps of his flock ſet before them there. If Mr Erſkine would be ſo good to them as tell them this, it might perhaps get a better hearing from them: but it is ſtill better they hear the truth from any body, than not all.

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The Right of the CHRISTIAN PEOPLE, and the Power of their PASTORS, in the ORDINATION of Miniſters of the Goſpel, aſſerted. With ſome Directions for REFORMATION.

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IF one would know the truth in any point touching religion that is in controverſy between parties contending for the pre-eminence in this world, the keenneſs of each faction muſt be far from him, and the leſs concern he has in the temporal intereſts of either ſide, he is the more fit to judge of the ſtrength of their arguments, ſo far as theſe are able to inſtruct him in things that have a reference to eternity. In the heat of contention, every party ſnatches the readieſt weapon for ſelf-defence, or for the hurt of the adverſary. And in this caſe ſomething of the truth may be found on both ſides, but mixed with a deal of falſehood; and in that field of battle it appears not like itſelf; it drudges there to the ambition, avarice, or fleſhly eaſe of a ſet of men, and ſerves to promote the temporal intereſt of one faction upon the ruin of another; and is ready to be treated by either ſide according to the appearance it makes againſt their intereſt. Yet truth, where-ever it appears, demands regard; and it is not the leaſt part of the duty we owe it, to contribute to our power to deliver it from the ſlavery it is put to by them that want only to ſerve themſelves of it.

Would it not move the indignation of any man that indeed believes the holy ſcriptures to be the words of eternal life, the words of God's grace, that teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to look for that bleſſed hope, to ſee theſe ſcriptures wreſted by all parties of men, contending for worldly pre-eminence in one ſhape or other, to anſwer their deſigns, and ſerve them in their malice and guile, hypocriſies, envies, and evil ſpeakings againſt one another? In oppoſition to this, it becomes us to ſtudy the exhortation given us by the Apoſtle Peter, when he tells us, "That all "fleſh is graſs, but the word of the Lord endureth for "ever," and calls us to lay aſide all malice and guile, and, as new-born babes, to deſire the ſincere milk of the word,

word, that we may grow thereby, if ſo be we have taſted that the Lord is gracious.

There is no controverſy more famous among us at this time than that concerning the right of the Chriſtian people to elect their paſtors, and the power of the paſtors in that matter.

The people's right was not long ago debated with no ſmall heat among the Epiſcopal diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed church; and theſe of them that found their intereſt in it pleaded moſt zealouſly for it, with all the criticiſms on συγκαταψηφίζομαι and χειροτονεω, and all the quotations of the ancients that their reading could furniſh them with; for all ſorts of clergymen will ſtand up for the rights and liberties of the people, when they find this neceſſary to raiſe themſelves; though, aſide from that, it will take a power of grace to make a clergyman a hearty friend to the liberty of the Chriſtian people. After much contention among theſe clergyman, they at length ſaw their intereſt lay in coming together, and ſuch union of the clergy is not the moſt friendly thing in the world to the liberty of the laity. But we are now again amuſed with a very hot debate in the eſtabliſhed church on the ſame ſubject. And one would think there muſt be ſomething in this right of the people, when no ſort of church-rulers are aſhamed to have recourſe to it on proper occaſions; yea, they can glory in patronizing it, though, at the ſame time, it muſt be owned there is a principle (not very Chriſtian) in the people, that inclines them to give good heed to thoſe teachers that zealouſly proclaim their right, and make the loudeſt complaints to them of their ſuperiors as incroaching upon it. And this contention in the church is not very unlike the ſtrange buſtle and confuſion in the ſtate about the exciſe-bill. Yet, becauſe it pretends an intereſt in the ſcriptures, and a concern in religion, it demands the attention of them that believe the ſcriptures, and would not deſire to be utter ſtrangers to any thing that pertains to true religion, let the intereſts of the differing parties be what they will. For whether this debate iſſue in their ſeparation from one another, or their coming together on ſome general terms of agreement, (in both which caſes we may ſuppoſe, from what has hitherto appeared, the clergy will ſee to themſelves); yet the truth is the truth ſtill; and ſomething ought to be ſaid for their ſakes who may be honeſtly inquiring after it, let the number be never ſo ſmall. For however whimſical they may appear that ſeek the truth without any worldly deſign, but

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with a reſpect to the world to come, no man's labour is ill beſtowed in contributing to their ſatisfaction.

The queſtion about the call to the miniſtry of the goſpel or word of faith ſuppoſes the truth of that goſpel; and they that are ſo unhappy as to diſbelieve it, cannot plead any concern in the queſtion. They can go no further than this, that every man has a right to inſtruct his neighbour in every thing that is good for him to know, as far as he is able, and as is conſiſtent with the good of the body-politic wherein they enjoy privileges together; and ſo it muſt be in the power of that body, to take care that it ſuffer no damage by any pretended exerciſe of this right among the members. But as to the church or kingdom of Chriſt, his officers, and the whole order of that ſociety, they have nothing to do about it, except it be to ſhew their greateſt diſlike and contempt of whatſoever appears moſt agreeable to the goſpel; though, after all, it cannot be reckoned exceeding diſcreet in them thus far to meddle with other mens matters, whereof they are not the moſt fit to judge. They are indeed ſometimes called upon and appealed to by both parties in this and other queſtions about the Chriſtian inſtitution, when they plead reaſon and nature's light againſt one another, where they have leaſt to ſay from the ſcriptures; but this is their folly and weakneſs to inquire at the light of nature what a poſitive inſtitution ſhould be.

It is not a ſign of the greateſt regard to the goſpel, in them that profeſs to believe it, to ſpeak as if what the New Teſtament ſays of the miniſtry of the word and ſuch things ſerved only for that age wherein it was committed to writing. For if this were the caſe, why had we any thing but the eſſentials written to us in that book? And why do we obſerve and admire the divine providence in the preſervation of that book, in a ſociety that corrupted the whole of Chriſtianity, and in the bringing of it again forth to the view of the nations in their own languages, as his teſtimony againſt all the corruptions of that ſame ſociety? And may not theſe of that Roman church as well alledge, that the New Teſtament ſerved indeed for the time wherein it was written; but as for after-ages, it belonged to them to adapt Chriſtianity to theſe, as the New Teſtament was ſuited to that age? However, it is manifeſt, they ſpeak lies in hypocriſy who make inſinuations this way, to the diſcredit of the only rule of Chriſtianity, and yet pretend, that the New Teſtament, and the practice of the

the firſt Chriſtians recorded there, is the rule of their conſciences as to this matter of the people's right.

That the writings of the Old Teſtament and the New contain a complete revelation of the will of God to men cannot be denied without the higheſt reflection on the truth of that revelation, that plainly ſets itſelf out as a declaration of the whole counſel of God, to which nothing can be added. The Old Teſtament plainly promiſed, in its concluſion, a further revelation, and the New Teſtament declares itſelf to be that revelation, while it concludes with a curſe on them that add to it, as well as on them that take from it. If therefore the New Teſtament ſay nothing on this queſtion about New-Teſtament miniſters, that depends entirely on the goſpel, no man can ſay any thing of it that can be ſubmitted to as a divine inſtitution, unleſs it could be proved that the New Teſtament has lodged a power in any man, or ſociety of men, to ſay in this matter what they think fit, or to act in it as they pleaſe; and till this be done, which in all appearance will never be, we muſt reſt ourſelves content with what the ſcriptures ſay, and examine every thing that men tell us by that.

And, ſeeing the holy ſcriptures contain a complete revelation of the will of God to men, no man can now pretend to be ſo called of God to the miniſtry of the word as the inſpired men, whom he choſe to give out that revelation, and to whoſe miſſion he bore witneſs in an extraordinary manner. But what theſe men were to them that had the divine oracles from their mouths, that their writings are to us, as our Lord ſaid of the writings of Moſes and the prophets; "they have Moſes and the prophets, let them hear them; "and if they will not believe Moſes and the prophets, neither will they be perſuaded though one roſe from the "dead."

The queſtion then is, How the holy ſcriptures declare that men are called to the office of feeding Chriſt's people by his word fully contained in theſe ſcriptures? For if the whole counſel of God be declared in them, and the miniſtry of the word of revelation depend wholly on that revelation, no man can lawfully pretend a call from God to give out the leaſt addition to that revelation; and as little can any pretend to be called of God to the miniſtry of the word already contained in the ſcriptures, but according to theſe ſcriptures; and every man that is called according to them has his call.

The New-Teſtament law ſpeaks not ſo clearly of any thing, touching

touching that miniſtry of the goſpel which the apoſtles left behind them on the earth, as of the characters of them that ſhould exerciſe this office, which are expreſs in the epiſtles to Timothy and Titus, and of the manner wherein they ought to exerciſe it, as is to be ſeen in Paul's diſcourſe to the Epheſian elders, in Peter's exhortation to elders, and in our Lord's commiſſion to miniſters, with whom he promiſes to be preſent to the end of the world.

It was moſt neceſſary, that the Chriſtian law ſhould be expreſs on the characters of the perſons that ſhould exerciſe this ſacred office, ſeeing it is not confined to any fleſhly ſeed or particular family, as was the prieſthood under the Old Teſtament. And if we may not be as certain whom we are to receive as miniſters of the word, by the deſcription that the Chriſtian law gives of the perſons, as the church of the Jews might be of the deſcent of their prieſts from Aaron, we are at a conſiderable loſs beyond them; eſpecially when the New Teſtament requires ſuch duties to be done to them, as cannot be done unleſs we know them, and contains ſuch threatenings to them that reject them, and ſuch promiſes to them that give them ſuitable reception, as muſt make every true Chriſtian anxious to know who they are; and for what end are theſe characters ſo expreſs and particular, if it be not, that we may by them know who are called of God to that office, and who not? And can it then be ſaid, without a reflection on the Chriſtian law, that this end cannot be reached by it? or, that we cannot thereby have as great certainty as the nature of the thing requires, concerning them whom we are bound to receive as miniſters of the goſpel? If the rule of the New Teſtament were in all things followed, there could be no difficulty in this matter. For no new convert could enter upon the exerciſe of this office, till he was well known in the Chriſtian ſociety whereof he was a member, and wherewith he aſſembled, and daily converſed, and which compared him with the deſcription given of a miniſter of the word by the apoſtles and evangeliſts; and this deſcription was the ſame that is now written to us in the New Teſtament. In ſuch a ſociety did a man then enter upon the exerciſe of this office, having the apoſtolic deſcription of a miniſter applied to him by a people profeſſing ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt, in ſubmitting to the overſight of an elder or biſhop called by him to that office. The caſe of Apollos was a little extraordinary. He had been a teacher among John's diſciples, and was privately inſtructed by Aquila and Priſcilla,

who were well known to the church in Corinth; and they, upon intimate acquaintance with him at Epheſus, where there was yet no church, recommended him to the church in Corinth, where he firſt exerciſed the office of a miniſter of the goſpel. However, even in this caſe, the church where he began his miniſtry had enough of certainty about his character.

It is not in the power of any to add to or diminiſh from the deſcription given of a miniſter of the goſpel in the New Teſtament, ſo as to inſiſt on any qualification as needful that is not mentioned there, or to make any qualification there ſpoke of needleſs. Neither has Jeſus Chriſt, the lawgiver, given to any miniſters or people any power or right whatſoever, to call, ſend, elect, or ordain any perſon to that office, who is not qualified according to the deſcription given in his law; as he has not given any power or right to reject the leaſt of them that are qualified according to that law. Let a man have hands laid on him by men that could prove an uninterrupted deſcent of impoſition of hands to him from the apoſtles, let him be ſet apart to that office by a company of miniſters the moſt conformable themſelves to the ſcripture-character of miniſters, and let him be choſen by the moſt holy people on earth; if yet he do not anſwer the New-Teſtament deſcription of a miniſter (which is poſſible, if the ſcripture be not the rule of their judgment in this particular caſe), he is not called of God to that office, and is indeed no miniſter of Chriſt, but runs unſent. And if this be the caſe, they boaſt in vain of any manner of election and ordination, who ſtudy not conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter in the exerciſe of that office. For no manner of ordination of ordinary miniſters can pretend ſuch a clear foundation in the New Teſtament, as the deſcription of the perſons that ſhould be miniſters. And they that do indeed ſtudy conformity to that deſcription, can ſecurely hear their miniſtry called in queſtion, and rejected by all ſorts of men, on grounds whereof the Chriſtian law makes no mention: yea, their miniſtry cannot be rejected, without diſobedience to Jeſus Chriſt.

Thus, whoever is conformable to that deſcription the Chriſtian law gives of a miniſter of the word, has all the call and miſſion that the Lord gives any man to that office; and whoever wants that, whatever he have, has not God's call.

The only part, therefore, that any ſort of men can claim in this matter is that of obedience to the Chriſtian law.

Miniſters,

Miniſters, elders, or biſhops, in this, as in all other things wherein they preſide among the Chriſtian people, are to teach them to obſerve what Chriſt has commanded them, and to go before them as their leaders, by doctrine and example, in the way of faith and obedience to the word of Chriſt contained in the ſcriptures. They have no power to ſeparate any man to that office whom God has not called. His law gives them only the power of obedience, in ſeparating the men who are called by him, according to his word: and in this they are not lords over his heritage, but enſamples to the flock which is among them, of obedience to their only Lord.

No people have right to elect any whom God has not called, or to reject thoſe whom he calls; but they muſt obey him, in receiving and doing all that he requires of them in his word toward them that are by him qualified according to the deſcription given in his law. If they be not capable to diſcern, by that deſcription, who are called of God to the miniſtry of the word, they are not capable to give obedience to the Chriſtian law on that head. The only part of the character as to which they are ſuppoſed incapable to judge, is that of aptneſs to teach, or holding faſt the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by ſound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainſayers. If paſtors be to judge of this by their ſkill in the wiſdom of words, or the wiſdom of the ſcribe and diſputer of this world, which cannot be brought down to the capacity of the Chriſtian people, how can they perſuade the people, that any man is called of God to the miniſtry of the word? Or, how can the people perceive, that their paſtors are leading them in the way of obedience to Chriſt, in ſeparating a man to that office whom they cannot know that Chriſt has called? In this caſe it is impoſſible for them to profeſs obedience to Jeſus Chriſt, in receiving one of his miniſters according to his law: they muſt inevitably give a blind obedience to their paſtors inſtead of Chriſt, if theſe paſtors do not inſtruct them in that wiſdom of words, ſo far as to enable them to perceive that a man is thereby apt to teach. But the New Teſtament makes the wideſt diſtinction betwixt that wiſdom of words, and the faithful word, which he that is ſeparated to the miniſtry of the goſpel muſt be holding faſt, that he may be able both to exhort in ſound teaching, and to convince the gainſayers; ſo that a man may be very learned in the one, and very unlearned in the other. And ſince the Chriſtian law plainly ſets aſide this wiſdom of the ſcribe and diſputer of this world, as

being no part of the deſcription it gives us of a miniſter of the word of faith, neither paſtors nor people have any more to judge of on this head, but the ſoundneſs of the doctrine, and aptneſs to communicate it to others for their inſtruction, conviction, and comfort. If the people may err, and be miſtaken as to this, ſo may miniſters: and what error is there among the people, that has not been maintained by miniſters? But ſtill, if they be not able to know this in any meaſure, they are in no meaſure capable to obey Jeſus Chriſt, in receiving and ſubmitting themſelves to the overſight of his miniſters.

The people cannot take impreſſions made on them by the doctrine, for their rule of judging in this caſe: for there are wrong as well as right impreſſions, and theſe muſt be judged of by the ſcriptures, and the faithful word contained in them. There are various impreſſions, according to the variety of the ſituations of the people, yea, and oft times according to their humours: ſo that it is ſcarce poſſible they can agree in judging by this rule, as they can in perceiving that a man brings ſound doctrine to them: and if the faith once delivered to the ſaints be preached to them, whoſe fault is it that they are not edified? Yea, and if they were to judge by impreſſions in this matter, they might come to reject that part of the ſcripture-doctrine that they did not find impreſſed on them, as well as the miniſter that holds faſt the faithful word; at leaſt this could not miſs to produce the ſame thing that the Apoſtle condemns in the Corinthians, that went into parties and factions on their experiences, by means of different preachers of the ſame doctrine.

A people cannot pretend to be obeying Chriſt in this thing, who are not ſhewing a regard to all his commands, nor living in ſubjection to the diſcipline expreſsly inſtituted in the ſcriptures. Zeal for the good work of obedience to one of his laws, while there is no reſpect ſhewed to other as plain laws of his, is utterly inconſiſtent with the ſcripture-character of a Chriſtian people. And how can a people pretend a regard to the word of God, in contending for their right of election, who ſhew not the ſame zeal for as clear a right of theirs, even the profeſſion of ſubjection to Chriſt, in contributing of their ſubſtance for the maintenance of their paſtors, that ſo they who preach the goſpel may live of the goſpel, as they that miniſtered about holy things eated of the temple, and they that waited at the altar partaked with the altar? Why do they ſuffer this right to be wrung out of their hands, and yield

yield it up peaceably to any that pleaſe to take it from them, while they are ſo jealous of the leaſt incroachment on the other right?

And as no people can pretend to be obeying Chriſt in this matter, but they who are ſtudying an univerſal conformity to the deſcription of a Chriſtian people in the New Teſtament, ſo no miniſters of the goſpel can act in it as paſtors, but among a flock hearing the voice of the chief ſhepherd Jeſus Chriſt. Their commiſſion beyond that is only to preach the goſpel to every creature: neither can they pretend to be the repreſentatives of the people in the part that the Chriſtian law calls them to act here; and as little can any part of the people repreſent another in their obedience to Chriſt, as to which every one of them muſt give an account of himſelf to God. And why may not the people be as well repreſented in all the other parts of their obedience to the laws of Jeſus Chriſt?

When a people ſtudying conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian people, ſhall happen to want paſtors, and have the Chriſtian law, this want cannot render them incapable of obeying that law, in receiving and ſubmitting to any as their miniſters that are evidently qualified according to that law. For they have the apoſtles; and though they want elders, they ſhould hear them, and ſo have elders.

The turning of the part that men have to act in the ordination of miniſters, out of the channel of humble obedience to the plain word of God, has been the ſpring of all the confuſion and diſorder that has taken place in the world about the ordination of miniſters. When the wiſdom of man made bold to make the leaſt alteration in one point of the divine inſtitution, it was for this end, to recommend Chriſtianity more to the world: and this end was ſteadily purſued by the covetouſneſs and ambition of the clergy, and the carnal zeal of the people for the worldly honour of Chriſtianity, and their own eaſe, till it became a worldly religion. One alteration in this point, as well as on other heads, made way for another to ſupport that, and ſo on, till the world was filled with uſages, regulations, conſtitutions, and laws, which came to be more attended to than the word of God, that was in effect made void by the keeping of theſe. And while ſuch wiſe regulations came in, upon pretence of unity, order, and decency, but ſerved mainly to the worldly exaltation of the clergy, and carnal eaſe of the people, they have

filled

filled the world with ſuch envying and ſtrife, ſuch wars and fightings, as could never have happened to them that contented themſelves with the ſcripture-rule. Yea, theſe regulations have plainly appeared at length to be proper engines of war to parties contending for the pre-eminence in this world. And therefore, if men be in earneſt to reform in this matter, they muſt lay aſide every invention of human wiſdom, and give over proudly contending for a right that clergymen, who cannot prevail in ruling the church, are perſuading the people that they have, and their ſuperiors are taking from them; even as the mob is enraged continually againſt the government in the ſtate by them that cannot prevail at court; and they muſt return to the old courſe of humble ſubjection and obedience to the plain word of God, the word of eternal life, without adding thereto, or diminiſhing from it. "And this is the right of the Chriſtian "people, and the power of their paſtors."

While the confuſion remains that has flowed from a falling away from the ſcripture-rule, and has come, by mens pretending to be maſters, inſtead of obedient ſervants to the Lord Chriſt, we ought not to deny their miniſtry, who, in any tolerable meaſure, anſwer the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter; nor need we be afraid to diſown the miniſtry of any ſort of men, of the greateſt name, who do not, in any tolerable meaſure, bear a conformity to that deſcription. This is a far ſurer footing to go upon, than that of the manner wherein a man comes into the poſſeſſion of the ſtipend in a pariſh, and becomes the public teacher there. It cannot be told, where the New Teſtament ſpeaks ſo clearly of pariſh-miniſters, and of ſtipends provided by law, and of elders not apt to teach ruling the people, and repreſenting them in the election of a pariſh-miniſter, or of the majority of heads of families or communicants chuſing a miniſter to all the reſt of the pariſh, and to the ſtipend, as it ſpeaks of the characters of a miniſter of the goſpel, and calls us to receive ſuch. Neither can it be ſo well told, where the New Teſtament ſays, that it is my election that makes a man my miniſter, as where it forbids me to reject a miniſter of Chriſt, and obliges me to receive a man becauſe he is one, according to the deſcription of a miniſter in the Chriſtian law.

But if men will not thus live at eaſe, in a diſorderly corrupted ſtate of things, and want to ſee a true reformation, then let them ſeriouſly deliberate on the following propoſals.

1. Let

1. Let the holy ſcriptures be attended to, and held faſt, in oppoſition to every other rule that men walk by; as, the imaginations of their own hearts, the courſe of this world, the traditions of the fathers, and commandments of men, and ſeducing ſpirits, ſpeaking beſide the ſcriptures, ſpeaking of the world, and denying directly or indirectly that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh. This is what Paul recommends to Timothy as a preſervative againſt the perilous times in the laſt days, 2 Tim. iii. He ſets before him the things he had learned of him, his doctrine and manner of life, now written to us in the New Teſtament, and this, with the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, which, he ſays, Timothy had known from a child, he points out to him as ſufficient to manifeſt the folly of them that reſiſt the truth, and to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. And, by what he there ſays, their folly may be manifeſt, who, for the ſake of other rules that they would have us to walk by, reflect on the holy ſcriptures, as dark and of doubtful interpretation, as the common reſort of heretics, and as fitted only to the firſt times of Chriſtianity; and not proper for the times we live in. And yet by ſuch like inſinuations as theſe, from men profeſſing that the ſcriptures are the only rule of Chriſtianity, are poor people frighted from ſearching the ſcriptures, and cleaving cloſe to them in their practice, leſt they ſhould fall under deluſion, againſt which the ſcriptures are not, it ſeems to them, ſo proper a preſervative as other rules that they are called to walk by. The Apoſtle, forewarning the Theſſalonians of the man of ſin, and of the ſtrong deluſion that God was to ſend on profeſſors of Chriſtianity that received not the love of the truth, gives them this direction againſt the beginnings of this evil, "ſtand "faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, "whether by word or our epiſtle," 2 Theſſ. ii. Theſe traditions which he calls them to hold, were partly written in his epiſtle, and partly delivered to them by word of mouth: for the New-Teſtament ſcripture was not then completed; but they had the whole counſel of God declared to them by the Apoſtle, which is now ſo fully declared in the writings of the New Teſtament, whereof the epiſtle to the Theſſalonians is a part, as nothing can be added to it. If therefore we would eſcape the corruption of Chriſtianity that was then beginning to work, and the ſtrong deluſion there foretold, we muſt firmly hold the things delivered to us in the New Teſtament, without adding to them or taking from them. We muſt

not

not ſatisfy ourſelves with an idle confeſſion, that the New Teſtament is the word of God, but we muſt hold faſt by it, as our only rule, in oppoſition to all other rules that have been added to it, or come in the place of it; we muſt hold faſt the things delivered there, in our practice, without turning to the right hand or to the left. And in order to this, let us hearken to the advice the Apoſtle gives to the church in Rome, which, if it had been always attended to, might have prevented all the abominations of that worldly kingdom, at the head of which that church came to be in after ages. He ſays, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye tranſ-"formed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. Let them that are miniſters ſearch the ſcriptures diligently, and with a ſingle eye, clear of worldly reſpects, and however much they know of them, let them yet be perſuaded, they are able to make them wiſer, and let them ſtill be diſciples of Chriſt, depending on him, as little children, for inſtruction from him, by opening their underſtanding to underſtand the ſcriptures. And let them not ſhun, for the fear of the people, or for any hope in this world, to ſpeak all the words of eternal life, and to declare the whole counſel of God keeping nothing back; knowing this, that the word is not committed to them to give it out as they pleaſe; and that now, ſince the revelation is finiſhed, there is no part of it but what is profitable for making the man of God perfect, or thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. They muſt not only take care of handling the word of God deceitfully, and ſtudy to teach Chriſt's diſciples to obſerve all he has commanded, but they muſt alſo go before them, as enſamples of holding faſt the things delivered in the ſcriptures, in a diligent obſervation of them, the leaſt of them not excepted. "For he that ſhall "break one of theſe leaſt commandments, and ſhall teach "men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of hea-"ven." And let the Chriſtian people alſo to their power, ſearch the ſcriptures, and examine every part of the doctrine of their miniſters, and their example by the ſcriptures, comparing ſcripture with ſcripture, that they may be followers of them only, as they can ſee them following Chriſt; and ſo profeſs ſubjection to the goſpel of Chriſt in following them. Let them bring all their former thoughts and opinions in matters of religion to the ſtandard of the ſcriptures, ready to give up with every principle and practice that has no foundation there, and to take up with every doctrine and practice

that

that ſhall be found there, and without delay to obſerve all things whatſoever Chriſt is found requiring there, however little they have been obſerved before. Even as the captive Jews, returning from typical Babylon, reformed themſelves by the written law, which, through the good providence of God, remained among them, notwithſtanding the captivity, and all the corruptions that had prevailed among them, and after they no more enjoyed many of the glorious things that attended the firſt giving out of that Old-Teſtament revelation. The Lord encourages them under their wants with this, that they had his word and his ſpirit remaining among them; and they diligently read that word, and what they found written there, they forthwith practiſed, though ſome of theſe practices had not been in uſe from the days of Joſhua the ſon of Nun. Though we cannot now pretend to many things, that accompanied the giving out of the New-Teſtament revelation, and behoved to ceaſe when it was completed, as the Apoſtle expreſsly declares they ſhould ceaſe, 1 Cor. xiii.; yet, by the wonderful providence of God, we have the writings of the prophets and the apoſtles of Chriſt preſerved, and brought into our own language, ſo as all have acceſs to know them: and in this caſe, is not the practice of the returning reforming Jews written for our learning, that we may take them as our example in this thing? Let us therefore, as they did, give attendance to the reading of the ſcriptures, to exhortation and to doctrine, that we may be by them furniſhed unto every good work, and hold faſt the things written there, ſo as not to let them go, or add any thing to them, in confeſſion or practice, for any hope or for any fear wherewith we can be moved.

2. Let the deſcription that the New Teſtament gives of a Chriſtian, as well as of a miniſter, be carefully obſerved; ſo as all they, and none elſe, may be acknowledged as Chriſtians, who are in ſome meaſure conformable to that deſcription. Our obedience to Jeſus Chriſt depends, at leaſt, as much on the knowledge of this, as on our acquaintance with the ſcripture-character of a miniſter; and as great evils have followed upon a departure from the rule of the New Teſtament on this head as on the other. It is impoſſible for us to ſearch mens hearts, and to know who is a true Chriſtian in the ſight of God, ſo as to diſtinguiſh him from one that is a hypocrite only in his ſight. But there are ſuch peculiar duties required of us towards the children of God, and the brethren of Jeſus Chriſt, on account of their relation to him, with ſuch

promiſes and threatenings annexed, that we had been in the greateſt difficulty about our obedience to Jeſus Chriſt, if his law had not alſo deſcribed to us the perſons to whom it obliged us to do theſe duties. Shall we think that the Chriſtian law hath made our peculiar eſteem and regard to a people whom we cannot know, to be the grand evidence of our love to Chriſt himſelf, and of our intereſt in him? Or are we to ſtand or fall at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and is it to fare with us eternally according to our behaviour to a peculiar people whom we cannot by any rule diſtinguiſh from other people?

The New Teſtament leaves us not at this uncertainty; but gives ſuch a deſcription of theſe whom we are to look on as the brethren of Chriſt, as will ſerve to convince Chriſt's enemies at his appearing, of their neglect and hatred of him, by their neglect and hatred of the leaſt of theſe his brethren whom they ſaw in this world, and as will ſerve, on the other hand, to manifeſt his peoples love to himſelf by their deeds of love to one another while they lived together in the world. The deſcription given in the New Teſtament of theſe to whom we are to behave as the children of God, and brethren of Chriſt, is ſo clear, as to leave us at as little uncertainty as the Jews and the nations their neighbours could be in, as to them that were of the ſeed of the Jews. We may take theſe few texts for inſtances on this ſubject, which is one way or other touched on throughout the New Teſtament, Matth. xi. 48. 49. 50. 1 John iii. 23. Matth. vii. 21. 22. 23. Heb. vi. 9. 10. Matth. xviii. 3. 5. 6. & x. 36. 37. 38. Luke xiv. 27. John xiii. 34. 35. Rev. xii. 17. 1 Theſſ. i.

The extraordinary ſigns that appeared about Chriſt's diſciples at the erection of his kingdom, and whereby the Lord bare witneſs to the firſt fruits of the Gentiles, when he viſited the nations, to "take out of them a people for his "name," are now ceaſed, becauſe there is no more uſe for them; but that "work of faith," that "labour of love," and that "patience of hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," that was the product of the goſpel in the firſt Chriſtians, muſt remain as long as Chriſtianity remains in the world. And as the diſtinguiſhing character of a Chriſtian was made up of theſe three from the beginning, ſo it muſt be ſtill to the end of the world. "For," ſays the Apoſtle, "whether prophe-"cies, they ſhall fail, whether tongues, they ſhall ceaſe, "whether knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away. And now abi-"deth faith, hope, charity, theſe three; but the greateſt

"of

" of theſe is charity," 1 Cor. xiii. And therefore where the work of faith appears not, nor the patience of hope, but eſpecially where there is no appearance of charity, in that labour of love ſhewed towards his name, in miniſtring to the ſaints, as he requires in his word, there, let men think what they will, there is no appearance of Chriſtianity.

We are not to take the deſcription of the children of God from our own fancy: For through our ſelf-liking, we are ready to fancy, that likeſt to God that is likeſt ourſelves; nor are we to take the deſcription of a child of God from the eſteem and approbation of the world, as if theſe who are highly eſteemed among men for holineſs, were ſo likewiſe in the ſight of God; for by that rule the Phariſees, who were " an abomination in the ſight of God," would have been his children, and his ſon a Samaritan, having a devil: but let us take the deſcription of a Chriſtian, with whom we are to behave as with the brother of Jeſus Chriſt, only from his own word in the New Teſtament. Let all our notions of a Chriſtian's character be examined and corrected by that infallible rule. Let the greateſt names of men that " could " ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels," if yet they be not conformable to that deſcription, fall in our eſteem before that rule. And let the leaſt of Chriſt's brethren be acknowledged by us according to that rule, though the " baſe, weak, " and fooliſh things of the world," and though they ſhould be " hungry and thirſty, naked, ſtrangers, and in priſon," or whatever their circumſtances be in this world, and however they be diſpiſed among men.

There is the more need for cleaving ſtrictly to the ſcripture-deſcription of a confeſſor of the name of Chriſt, that the New Teſtament foretels a falſe profeſſion of Chriſtianity coming in place of the true one, and ſetting it aſide: for Paul, forewarning Timothy of the " perilous times to come in the " laſt days," points out the danger of theſe times in deſcribing the people that ſhould then have " a form of godlineſs, " denying the power of it;" and, as a guard to us againſt the peril of theſe times, he gives this charge,—— " From ſuch " turn away," 2 Tim. iii. By this new form of godlineſs, or of Chriſtianity, ſuited to the people there deſcribed, the " outer court of the Lord's houſe" came " to be trodden un- " der foot of the nations," and " the man of ſin" roſe to his ſeat in " the temple of God," and " the power of the " people," whom God " took out of the nations for his " name," was ſcattered, when, by this " form of godlineſs,"

they came to be "mingled again with the people of theſe a-"bominations;" and ſo that took place which was pointed at in the prophecy of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiii. 17. 18. 19.

The Apoſtle likewiſe gives Timothy a ſample of theſe, that, in the laſt days, ſhould have the form of godlineſs denying its power, in them who, at that time, under the name of *Chriſtians*, went about craftily among the diſciples to ſubvert the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and prevailed on them that had not attained to that knowledge of the truth, whereby they might be delivered from the dominion of their luſts; and therefore wanted a profeſſion of Chriſtianity under which they might have ſome more eaſe in the fulfilment of them. And theſe were, on the one hand, the Judaizers, largely deſcribed in the epiſtles of Paul; and, on the other hand, they that were confident of their juſtification, by a knowledge and a faith that they ſaid they had, which did not ſhew itſelf in works of obedience to the goſpel; for they came to know their juſtification a ſhorter way, as we ſee in the epiſtle of James, and in Jude, and the ſecond epiſtle of Peter.

The Apoſtle compares them whom he thus ſhews to Timothy to the Egyptian magicians, in their oppoſition to the word of God to keep his people in bondage whom he made free to ſerve him. And thereby he inſinuates, that, as the true Chriſtian profeſſion was at firſt eſtabliſhed in the world by ſigns, ſo that other form of godlineſs ſhould have ſigns on its ſide alſo, whereby men would harden themſelves in cleaving to it, in oppoſition to the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity deſcribed in the ſcriptures, to which God bare witneſs by all the ſigns recorded there. But he ſays theſe men ſhall not proceed the full length, even as theſe Egyptians, though they held pace with Moſes ſo far, did not go the full, and were obliged to own themſelves outdone by the finger of God. So none of the men that ever gloried in any ſigns that they imagined to be wrought in favours of the modern form of Chriſtianity, in any ſhape of it, can ſo much as pretend, that the ſigns they talk of ever proceeded the length of the ſigns whereby God bare witneſs to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity that is deſcribed in the New Teſtament. How ſhall we then turn away from them that "have a form of godlineſs, de-"nying the power of it," as the Apoſtle charges us, but by turning to the Chriſtianity deſcribed in the New Teſtament, and there exemplified to us in the way of the firſt Chriſtians, to which the Lord bare witneſs by ſuch ſigns as no other Chriſtianity in after-ages could ever pretend to?

If

If we would indeed be ſo much as ſcriptural profeſſors of Chriſtianity, let us every one ſeek to be conformed to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian, without cutting or carving upon it, or ſeeking to bring it down to us, but to have ourſelves brought up to it, without adding to it or taking from it. And let as many as are thus minded ſeparate themſelves to the law of God, from theſe that ſhew no ſuch purpoſe of heart, but are willing to reſt in the form of godlineſs, denying the power of it, or denying the ancient work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope, which is the power of godlineſs. And herein alſo we may ſtudy the example of the typical Iſrael, in their reformation when they returned from typical Babylon. They not only refuſed the Samaritans, offering to incorporate with them and build the temple, though that refuſal brought no ſmall trouble upon them, but long after that they found, in reading the law of God, that the ſeed of Iſrael ſhould not be mingled with ſtrangers; and particularly they found it written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite ſhould not come into the congregation of God for ever; and when they had heard the law, they ſeparated from Iſrael all the mixed multitude. They trembled at the words of God, and were not afraid to depart from the practice of their fathers, that had departed from the law of God on that head, though they themſelves had been before following them in that departure: for they ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, and ſtood and confeſſed their ſins, and the iniquities of their fathers. If Chriſtians had trembled as much at the word of God on this head, as they did at ſeparation, when the form of godlineſs without the power of it was taking place, Chriſtianity had never been ſo much corrupted in the profeſſion of it as it has manifeſtly been. And there has not been one true ſtep of reformation from that corruption taken at any time, but by them that were more afraid of the word of God, and ſhunned a departure from it, more than ſeparation or departure from their former courſes, and the courſes of their fathers, or from the fellowſhip of any ſort of men in the world. Let them, therefore, that ſeek to be conformed to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian, be ſeparated to the law of their Lord, confeſſing their ſin, and the iniquity of their fathers, in having fellowſhip in that form of godlineſs with them that denied the power of it. And whereas they and their fathers in this nation have been zealous contenders for ſuch a form; and have ſworn to it, and for the ſake of that expreſsly abjured Chriſt's own inſtitution,

tution, under an odious name, let them confeſs the iniquity of that alſo; and ſo ſtudy reformation according to the New Teſtament in Chriſt's blood, which can both direct and enable them to all the reformation that God requires of them, and is the only everlaſting covenant that ſhall never be forgotten.

Let them aſſemble themſelves together, in the confeſſion of the faith that is in Chriſt the Son of God the Mediator of that covenant, and in obedience to his law in that covenant, to obſerve all his inſtitutions of worſhip, continuing ſtedfaſt in the doctrine and in the fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, praiſing God, and to obey his new commandment in all the branches of it, and to obſerve all things whatſoever he commands, as they find them written in his law. And while they are thus ſeparated to the law of God, let them be in the diligent uſe of every mean there preſcribed for keeping up the ſtudy of conformity to the ſcripture-character of a Chriſtian among them, as theſe mentioned Matth. xviii. and 1 Cor. v. Heb. iii. 12. 13. & x. 23. 24. 25. & xii. 15. Leſt they again ſwerve from the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, and return to a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it.

And when the Chriſtian people thus ſeparate themſelves to the law of God, let none be acknowledged as miniſters of the word or elders but according to their conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter; even as, among the captives returned from typical Babylon, theſe were put from the prieſthood as profane, whoſe deſcent from Aaron did not appear.

3. Let the connection betwixt Chriſtianity and the croſs, of which Paul ſpeaks to Timothy when forewarning him of the perilous times, be carefully obſerved. When the Apoſtle ſets his doctrine and manner of life, in oppoſition to them that have a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it, he inſiſts on his patience, and ſets forth his ſufferings; and, leſt any ſhould imagine this was peculiar to him, or the time wherein he lived, he ſays, "yea, and all that will live godly "in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution." Men may have the form of godlineſs of which he ſpeaks without perſecution; yea, it was the proper fruit of an endeavour to ſeparate Chriſtianity from the croſs; but live godly in Chriſt Jeſus without the croſs, they cannot. This living godly in Chriſt is not a manner of life utterly hid from the world's view, as they that are gainers by the form of godlineſs without the power of it would

would have its power to lie unobſerved, leſt, being as light ſet on a candleſtick, or as a city on a hill, it ſhould create them diſturbance; and ſo they tell the deluded people pretty tales of this ſort, that it is the beſt way of going to heaven, to go with the ſound of their feet unheard. But the godly living that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, is a manner of life that provokes the hatred of the ungodly, and brings on perſecution from the world.

It is true, the firſt Chriſtians had ſometimes reſt from public perſecution, as Acts ix. 31.; and Paul himſelf was not always in the hands of the magiſtrate; yea, our Lord, the great pattern of ſuffering, did not ſuffer publicly from the powers of the earth till the end; but he has foretold, that a man's foes ſhall be they of his own houſe, and private perſecution from friends and neighbours, and all ſorts of men that we live among in the world, for the ſake of Chriſt and his word, is no ſuch light thing as they that look on it at a diſtance may be ready to imagine; yea, the trial of cruel mockings for his ſake cannot be made eaſy but by that ſame grace that acted in Chriſt when he patiently endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame. The Pſalmiſt, in his name, complains of hypocritical mockers in feaſts, gnaſhing upon him with their teeth, and of his becoming a ſtranger unto his brethren, and an alien to mother's children, and of the men that ſit in the gate ſpeaking againſt him, and his being the ſong of the drunkards, &c. Different parties of worldly men, contending for pre-eminence in this world, will be ridiculing and reproaching one another; but it is another thing, and requires more ſelf denial, to be ſuffering from all ſorts of men for the word of God, than to be enduring for the ſake of a man's ſelf, in purſuing and hoping to attain the honour, gain, or eaſe of a preſent world. The clergy have endured much to raiſe themſelves in the world, and maintain what they have gained; but the ſufferings of the firſt Chriſtians were not attended with any worldly hope, and they were ſupported under them with no hope but that which is propoſed in the goſpel. Paul declares his diſpoſition in this matter, and his expectation of the concurrence of every confirmed Chriſtian, when he ſays, "Yea, doubtleſs and I count all things but loſs, "that I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, "and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conform-"able unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto "the reſurrection of the dead.—Let us therefore as many as "be perfect be thus minded."— Phil. iii.

As

As he there ſtates an oppoſition betwixt his way and that of the Judaizers who minded earthly things, ſo here he ſtates an oppoſition between living godly in Chriſt with ſuffering, and the way of the men contending for the form of godlineſs without the power of it: for he ſays,—"But evil men and "ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being de- "ceived." He tells the Galatians how ſuch men were ſhunning the croſs by corrupting the goſpel, reconciling it ſome way to its enemies, eſpecially in points whereat they were moſt enraged. And, in after ages, the deſire of conformity to the world, and of friendſhip with it, worked in that ſame way, and produced the form of godlineſs with a denial of the power of it; and ſo men went farther and farther from the old purpoſe of conformity to a humbled Chriſt, and from the Chriſtian patience of hope, till they began to think not only of eſcaping perſecution themſelves, but even of perſecuting others; ſo that at length the form of godlineſs became an engine of perſecution againſt the power of godlineſs, as well as a proper mean of ſtrife and bloodſhed among themſelves, differing about the ſeveral parts of that form as their intereſts led them. And all this was carried on with the faireſt pretences of zeal for the honour of Chriſt and Chriſtian prudence; yea, it became a principle of Chriſtianity to perſecute; and the ancient doctrine of love to enemies, and patient bearing of wrongs, and the like, came to be as an old almanack calculated only for the time of Chriſt and his apoſtles. Therefore ſays the Apoſtle, "All that will live godly in Chriſt Je- "ſus ſhall ſuffer; but evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe "and worſe, deceiving and being deceived."

Let them, therefore, that have reformation indeed at heart, ſhew the ſame temper of mind that the Apoſtle oppoſes to that of the Antichriſtian generation. Let them ſeparate themſelves to live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, deſiring conformity to him in his humiliation, and ſhewing the hope of conformity to him in his glory. And let not theſe men ſpeak of their ſuffering as Chriſtians, who are at the ſame time ſhewing the hope of large contributions for their life in this world, from an enraged multitude, and boaſting in this, and in the hope of a numerous following, and a ſtrong party to make head againſt another faction, yea, and profeſſing the principle of perſecution, and of the extirpation of all ſects but their own out of the nation, as ſoon as it ſhall be in their power, and that, they hope, will be after this evil day is over. For ſuch men will have a form of godlineſs

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ſuited unto theſe things wherein they boaſt, and ſhun every confeſſion and practice in religion that appears inconſiſtent with theſe things, let it be never ſo clear in the New Teſtament. So their ſeparation cannot be a turning away from them that have a form of godlineſs denying the power of it, but a diviſion from that form in one ſhape to eſtabliſh it in another.

Let ſuch as want to ſee goſpel-reformation look on every opportunity of ſeparating the croſs and Chriſtianity, by abating a very little of its rigour, as a ſtrong temptation and guard againſt it. Let them treat every occaſion of riſing in this world, and being avenged on their enemies, as our Lord treated the vogue of the multitude, and their purpoſes of making him a king. And while they give the ſtricteſt obedience, and pay the greateſt deference to magiſtrates, as the New Teſtament commands, and reject all them that are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities, let them beware of all the tricks the clergy have been playing with the magiſtrate from the days of Conſtantine. But let them reckon themſelves, as every firſt church of the ſaints did, complete in Chriſt, the head of all principality and power, head over all the heavenly hoſts, powers of heaven, powers of hell, and powers of the earth, unto the church which is his body, unto whom therefore every member of that body has a readier and more immediate acceſs than to any of his vaſſals, on whom they muſt not depend, but hold that head under whom they are all working together for the good of his body the church; and whatever way they behave under the conduct of his providence, they are working together to bring the nations of them that are ſaved into the new Jeruſalem, who have their dependence on none but their head; and all the powers in the creation, good or bad, are ſerving them, while they hold that head.

Theſe three directions, given by the Apoſtle againſt the perils of the laſt times, are thus laid before the conſciences of them, eſpecially that ſhew any deſire to eſcape theſe perils; and, however theſe may treat them now, their conſciences will one way or other anſwer upon them before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.

A Letter to Mr JOHN WILLISON, on a paſſage in his ſynodical ſermon, concerning ILLITERATE MINISTERS.

He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. —— *And he gave ſome paſtors and teachers,—for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come*, &c. Eph. iv. 7.—14. —— *And ye are complete in him*, Col. ii. 8. 9. 10.

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SIR,

IT no way ſurpriſes me, that when the cry of the danger of the church is popular, you ſhould appear as the author of a ſermon or pamphlet bearing that title; but I confeſs I cannot ſo eaſily underſtand how you imagine that your church is in danger from a ſect which you ſay "is lately riſen among us, who decry the knowledge of human "arts and ſciences, and of the languages, as unneceſſary for "goſpel-miniſters, and therefore make choice of illiterate "men for that office."

This complaint of illiterate miniſters would have come more ſeaſonably to your church, when they depoſed Meſſ. Colvil and Ramſay, and licenſed John Gillone, than at this day, when your ſect is every where complaining of the church's danger, from men in reſpect of whom you yourſelves are illiterate men. Your fathers, the covenanters, that abjured Independency, depoſed two able miniſters, and exceeding peaceable members of ſociety, and ſet up an illiterate man to preach the goſpel: but the men of letters, of whom you ſtand in fear, have only declared a few turbulent members of their ſociety to be none of that ſociety, of which they pretended to be a conſiderable part, while they would not walk orderly in it. And you cannot charge theſe men of letters with the crime of palming illiterate men upon you.

The ſect that makes choice of illiterate men for miniſters

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is none of your ſociety: their miniſters are not, pretend not to be miniſters of your church, and they impoſe their miniſtry upon none. It cannot be eaſily believed, that you are ſeeking to promote the welfare of that ſect, in the warning you give of the danger of illiterate miniſters: and as little can it be perceived, what is the danger of your church from ſuch inſignificant uſeleſs perſons as you repreſent them to be. What have you to fear from ſuch men as have neither ſkill nor power to handle againſt an adverſary the only weapon they pretend to uſe? Or is your church in danger from the weakneſs of her adverſaries? Yet if, while you are giving warning of your church's danger, you are alſo ſo good as to point out to that ſect its danger likewiſe, that ſect is certainly obliged to you.

After all, who knows but perhaps you have a ſecret fear, that through theſe illiterate miniſters "your craft may be in "danger of being ſet at nought;" and while you are far below the prevailing party in the knowledge of letters, and ſeek to excel in popular preaching, they may ſome way rival you in that among the people that know not letters, on whom you have the greateſt influence? Yet I am of opinion, you need have no great fear on this head; when I conſider the ſubject of their preaching, "the kingdom of "heaven, the kingdom that is not of this world;" which can never take with the multitude, as does the preaching of your covenanted kingdom; and when I think on the ſtrictneſs of their diſcipline, to which your followers, that can be eſteemed good Chriſtians at an eaſier rate, will not eaſily ſubmit; eſpecially when they muſt loſe all their eſteem among you as Chriſtians, and become the objects of univerſal contempt the moment they ſubmit to it.

Perhaps you have a ſuſpicion, that, as it ſometimes happens to the beſt fencers in duelling, even ſo it may poſſibly fare with you in a conflict with theſe ſame illiterate men. A literate friend of yours (for ſo we muſt call you) made a ſcornful attack, not long ago, upon ſome of theſe miniſters; and all the authority he could diſplay, all the grimace he was maſter of, was not ſufficient to bear them down: Impudent fellows that they were! They handled their weapon in defence, till he thought he had enough of it, if he be capable of ſuch a thought. But you are a little wiſer. Your way, as far as it is above board, is, to ſhow in your *concio ad clerum*, That the church is in danger from a ſet of men, to whom it is a great loſs they want letters.

It had been ſtill a queſtion with me, if you indeed apprehended any danger to your church from theſe men, if your inſinuation of a compariſon to Julian, that infamous apoſtate, had not betrayed your inward fear, or inclination to fill others with the greateſt fear of danger from that airth; that all whom your compariſon may touch, may be abhorred as haters of Zion, and that none who would be reckoned lovers of Zion may join iſſue with any whom you have been able to claſs with that infamous apoſtate. That this good end may be reached, you take care to make that Julian no better than he was. You ſay, the devil learned Julian to take away the maintenance of miniſters, and put down their ſchools of learning; that he was guilty of robbing of miniſters and ſchools of learning of their maintenance and revenues; and hereupon you agree with the obſervation of your fathers and predeceſſors, that he did more miſchief to the church and her miniſters than the bloody Diocleſian; and you give this reaſon for it, That hereby he hindered a ſucceſſion of able miniſters in the church, while, when Diocleſian took many eminent men away, there ſtill aroſe others in their ſtead. The inference muſt be, that the church is in greater danger from the ſect that you repreſent as joining iſſue with that Julian, than from the moſt bloody perſecutor. This ancient obſervation, and the reaſon you bring to ſupport it, comes very natively from clergymen; but you muſt excuſe people of another character, if they cannot perceive the juſtneſs of it. For they cannot think, that the church and her miniſters enjoyed any of theſe things by Diocleſian, whereof you ſay Julian robbed them; and if the taking away the maintenance that they had not under Diocleſian, hindered a ſucceſſion of able miniſters in the time of Julian, which the taking away of their lives alſo could not hinder in the time of Diocleſian; it muſt be inferred, that theſe who deſired the office of the miniſtry in Julian's time, were men of a very different ſort from thoſe that deſired it in the time of Diocleſian. It may be a queſtion, if Julian deprived the Chriſtian miniſtry of any thing the goſpel gave them; and it has been alſo obſerved, that Conſtantine did more harm to the church than Julian and Diocleſian were capable to do, by their different ways of oppoſition to it: for that which ambitious covetous miniſters reckon to be their intereſt, is not the intereſt of the profeſſion of the name of Chriſt. It is certain, no true clergyman will join iſſue ſo far with Julian, as to declare theſe things unneceſſary for them of which he deprived them; but no

no lover of Zion or the true church, if not abuſed by the clergy, can be offended, that their covetouſneſs and ambition is not gratified. Your ſort of men applaud Conſtantine, whoſe moral character is as diſagreeable to the rules of the goſpel as Julian's; and Jovian, a debauched man, but a firm friend to that ſort of Chriſtianity and Chriſtian miniſtry that was in thoſe days, is as famous among you as Julian is infamous.

Becauſe it may tend to your inſtruction, I ſhall take the trouble to tranſcribe a paſſage concerning Julian from the author of The Fable of the Bees. The paſſage is as follows.

" —— When Emperors were once become Chriſtians, the " clergy received ſuch power and other worldly comfort from " their authority, that they could not think of living without, " and therefore loſt all patience when Julian was advanced to " the empire. They did and ſaid againſt him every thing " that rage and hatred could inſpire, and fixed upon him the " ſirname of *Apoſtate*, to render him odious, which has " ſtuck by him to this day. Julian had been differently edu- " cated, as well at Pagan as at Chriſtian univerſities, and at " one time he had Heathens, and at another Chriſtians for " his tutors: but I never ſaw it proved, that he adhered to " Chriſtianity at a time he might with ſafety have refuſed it. " It muſt be confeſſed, that as ſoon as he was maſter of his " choice, he made the worſt, and unfortunately embraced " Paganiſm, becauſe it was the religion of his anceſtors.

" But let him be called Heathen or Apoſtate, or what the " clergy pleaſes, to judge of him impartially from hiſtory, " we muſt own, that he was a virtuous and gallant prince, " endued with wit and humanity, and more ſteddineſs and " moderation than any of his Chriſtian predeceſſors. In " his letters, he appears to have been a father to his people; " and one of them I will take leave to inſert here, which " will make us perfectly well acquainted with the tolerating " temper of that prince, and at the ſame time, point at the " real cauſe of the clergy's animoſities againſt him.

Julian to the Boſtrens.

" I Should have thought, indeed, that the Galilean leaders " would have eſteemed themſelves more indebted to me " than to him who preceded me in the adminiſtration of the " empire: for, in his time, many of them ſuffered exile, " perſecution, and impriſonment; multitudes of thoſe whom " in their religion, they term *heretics*, were put to the " ſword;

" ſword; inſomuch, that in Samoſata, Cyzicum, Paphla-
" gonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and many other countries, whole
" towns were levelled with the earth. The juſt reverſe of
" this has been obſerved in my time. The exiles have been
" recalled, and the proſcribed reſtored to the lawful poſſeſ-
" ſions of their eſtates: but to that height of fury and diſ-
" traction are this people arrived, that, being no longer al-
" lowed the privilege to tyranniſe over one another, or per-
" ſecute either their own ſectaries, or the religious of the
" lawful church, they ſwell with rage, and leave no ſtone un-
" turned, no opportunity unemployed, of raiſing tumult and
" ſedition. So little regard have they to true piety, ſo little
" obedience to our laws and conſtitutions, however humane
" and tolerating. For ſtill do we determine, and ſteadily re-
" ſolve, never to ſuffer one of them involuntarily to be
" drawn unto our altars. *** As for the mere people, in-
" deed, they appear driven to theſe riots and ſeditions by
" theſe amongſt them whom they call *clerics*; who are now
" inraged to find themſelves reſtrained in the uſe of their for-
" mer power and intemperate rule. *** They can no longer
" act the magiſtrate, or civil judge, nor aſſume authority to
" make people's wills, ſupplant relations, poſſeſs themſelves
" of other mens patrimonies, by ſpecious pretences, transfer
" all into their own poſſeſſion. For this reaſon, I have
" thought fit, by this public edict, to forewarn the people of
" this ſort, that they raiſe no more commotions, nor gather
" in a riotous manner about their ſeditious clerics, in de-
" fiance of the magiſtrate, who has been inſulted, and in
" danger of being ſtoned by theſe incited rabbles. In their
" congregations, they may notwithſtanding aſſemble, as they
" pleaſe, and croud about their leaders performing worſhip,
" receiving doctrine, and praying according as they are by
" them taught and conducted: but if with any tendency to
" ſedition, let them beware how they hearken or give aſſent,
" and remember it is at their peril, if, by theſe means, they
" are ſecretly wrought up to mutiny and inſurrection.
" *** Live therefore in peace and quietneſs, neither ſpite-
" fully oppoſing, or injuriouſly treating one another. You
" miſguided people of the new way, beware on your ſide!
" And you of the ancient eſtabliſhed church, injure not
" your neighbours and fellow citizens, who are enthuſiaſti-
" cally led away in ignorance and miſtake, rather than with
" deſign or malice. It is by diſcourſe and reaſon, not by
" blows, inſults, or violence, that men are to be informed
" of

" of truth, and convinced of error. Again, therefore, and " again, I injoin and charge the zealous followers of the " true religion, no wife to injure, moleſt, or affront, the " Galilean people."

" Theſe were the ſentiments of this Emperor, whom the " clergy make ſuch a monſter, and whoſe very clemency " they make a handle of for ſlander, complaining, that, by " his mildneſs and unlimited toleration, he had done more " prejudice to the church than others with perſecution. He " was a politic prince, yet the clergy proved too hard for " him, and never ceaſed plotting againſt him, till at laſt, to " the great joy of the orthodox, he was aſſaſſinated by one " of his own Chriſtian ſoldiers."

Thus far my author. And, as his ſtory tells, if the devil was teaching Julian this method with the Chriſtians of thoſe days, you may ſee he was not his only ſcholar at that time: for, according to the ſcripture-account of the devil's teaching and influence, the Heathens, whom Julian was reſtraining from injuring, moleſting, or affronting the Chriſtians, and not they only, but the Chriſtian clergy eſpecially, ſeem to have been very good proficients at his ſchool, for the time they had been at it; and Julian did not think they deſerved to be ſo treated by their fellow-diſciples of another claſs. The myſtery of iniquity began to work, even among the illiterate men that were ſet apart to the office of the miniſtry, in the days of the apoſtles; but when they got theſe things from Conſtantine that Julian took from them, you ſee how they behaved.

Your warning of the danger of an illiterate miniſtry begins with an advice to your brethren to be as the well furniſhed ſcribe, that bringeth forth out of his treaſure things new and old. Where you point to our Lord's ſaying to his diſciples, after he had been inſtructing them in the nature of the kingdom of heaven by parables, and inquiring, if they underſtood them, Matth. xiii. 51. 52. when they anſwered, that they did, he ſays to them, " Therefore every ſcribe, which is in- " ſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man " that is an houſeholder, which bringeth forth out of his " treaſure things new and old." You give us ſome explication of this text, ſo far as you quote it; the ſcribes treaſure you ſay, is a ſtock of neceſſary and uſeful knowledge, out of which variety of proviſion may be brought for the entertainment of people's ſouls: " The prieſts lips ſhould preſerve

" know-

" knowledge." But this explication is more general, and leſs clear than the text itſelf, as it ſtands in connection with the context: the text ſays, " Therefore every ſcribe which " is inſtructed (or taught) unto the kingdom of heaven." And you alſo go about to enlarge the text of the Old Teſtament that you cite in confirmation of your gloſs, by forbearing to mention the latter part of it, which, as it ſtands in that context, Mal. ii. would have told what *knowledge* it is that the " prieſts lips ſhould preſerve." If by *the law* there you will not underſtand only " the law of truth, the law of " the Lord;" but will extend it to ſignify the law of the Roman empire, and the municipal laws of the nations, then you ought to have given that law a place among the ſciences, your handmaids to ſcripture-knowledge: and I am ſure it deſerved a place in your catalogue as well as any of them. Next, for an explication of " things new and old," you have a variety of proviſion for the entertainment of people's ſouls, which variety you diſtribute under two heads. 1. Their ſouls muſt be entertained with ſcripture-knowledge, the knowledge of God, his perfections, the myſtery of the Trinity and of Jeſus Chriſt our ſurety and ſacrifice. Here you are a little more particular, but take care never to mention " the kingdom of heaven," of which the text ſpeaks. 2. The people's ſouls muſt be entertained with the knowledge of human arts and ſciences, and of the languages, eſpecially theſe in which the Bible was firſt written. And here again you are more copious than on the firſt head: you have a great variety here of proviſion for the entertainment of people's ſouls; hiſtory, philoſophy, mathematics, geography, aſtronomy, and polemic divinity. And thus we have your ſenſe of " the things new and old," which ſerve to ſhew, that illiterate men cannot be " the ſcribes" of whom the Lord there ſpeaks. But, after all you have ſaid, the illiterate may find you very lame, both in quoting and explaining the words of this text; and that you have wreſted this ſcripture in ſuch a manner as to bring a ſort of ſcribes out of it that was never in it. The ſcribe of whom the text ſpeaks is a " ſcribe inſtructed in or unto the kingdom of heaven;" but this is not once mentioned in the inſtruction of your ſcribe. The " things new and old" that the text ſpeaks of are the things of " the kingdom of heaven," which " be- " gan to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf," and were preached by his apoſtles to the nations, and committed to writing in the books of the New Teſtament. Theſe were the ſcribes whom Chriſt told the Jews he would " ſend to them,"

Matth.

Matth. xxiii. 34. 35. And when they came to them, their doctors " perceived, that they were unlearned and ignorant " men," but " took knowledge of them that they had been " with Jeſus," Acts iv. 13. as the Jews before marvelled when they heard himſelf teach, " how he knew the ſcriptures" (γράμματα comp. 2 Tim. iii. 15.) " being unlearned," John vii. 15. They knew he could read the ſcriptures as other Jews did in the ſynagogues, but how could the " ſon of the " carpenter," without the education of the ſcribes, take upon him to do their office; or, in a more modern ſtile, jump from his trade into the pulpit? Now theſe ſcribes, whom he firſt inſtructed and ſent forth to make out the New-Teſtament revelation, and commit it to writing, " ſaid none other " things than theſe which the prophets and Moſes did ſay " ſhould come," Acts xxvi. 22. And thus the " things " brought forth out of the treaſure," committed to theſe " earthen veſſels," were new, and they were old. Theſe " ſcribes brought forth the knowledge of the glory of God, " in the face of Jeſus Chriſt," that had been of old ſhewed through " a veil" by Moſes and the prophets. Theſe " ſtewards of the myſteries of God ſpake the wiſdom of God, " that was hid in myſtery, and not the wiſdom of this " world, nor of the princes of this world, who knew not " the wiſdom of God" that was " hid in myſtery;" which wiſdom theſe ſcribes ſpake, " not in the words which man's " wiſdom teacheth," but, with great plainneſs and ſimplicity, took the words of the Holy Ghoſt in the Old Teſtament, from a tranſlation then in common uſe, and applied them to the things of the kingdom of heaven in the New Teſtament, according to the prime intent of theſe words, which was " revealed to them by the Holy Ghoſt" that indited them. The Lord ſpake by figures concerning the kingdom of heaven, and explained theſe to his ſcribes; and the New-Teſtament revelation, which he gave them to bring forth to the world, is the plain declaration of the ſame things that had been foreſhewed of old in the dark prophecies and figures of the Old Teſtament: wherefore he ſays, " Every ſcribe in- " ſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, bringeth forth out " of his treaſure things new and old." Whoſoever is ſkilled in this wiſdom that is taught in the New Teſtament, ſo as to be able to teach it to others, is now the Chriſtian ſcribe; and what a difference is there betwixt this and the knowledge of your ſcribe? which is " the wiſdom of words, the wiſ- " dom of this world, the wiſdom of the Jewiſh ſcribe," and

of " the diſputer of this world, and mans wiſdom," which is " fooliſhneſs with God," and was manifeſted by him to be fooliſhneſs, before he brought forth his wiſdom that was hid in myſtery to the view of the world, in that preaching which was a ſtumbling block to the Jewiſh ſcribe, and fooliſhneſs to the Grecian diſputers and orators: but unto all whom " he called, the wiſdom of God, and the power of God." Whatever difference the ſcriptures make betwixt theſe two kinds of wiſdom, you ſtill affirm the " wiſdom of the Jewiſh " ſcribe and the wiſdom of the diſputer of this world," is a good handmaid to ſcripture-knowledge, and ſerves to promote the welfare of your church. Your reaſon is as wide as the explication of your text. For, ſay you, an ignorant miniſtry is a reproach to any church. If you be punning on the word *ignorant*, and punning be reaſoning, you have hit it; but if you indeed ſay, that ignorance of the human arts and ſciences before mentioned is a reproach to any church, this will need another reaſon to confirm it. I hope you do not mean, " that the man Chriſt Jeſus, (ſuffer the expreſſion, becauſe it is ſcripture), the head of his body the church," (without which he could not be its head), is a reproach to that church, becauſe he never was taught, nor did teach in his church, theſe arts and ſciences taught in your ſchools, wherein you would have your expectants to be trained for ſcripture knowledge. Neither can I perſuade myſelf, that you think the fiſhers of Galilee, who were not ſkilled in theſe ſciences, were a reproach to the church that is built on their doctrine, or Paul, a Jewiſh ſcribe, but a babbler at Athens, where Jeſus ſent him, when he did not allow him to ſtay and preach in Jeruſalem, the place where his learning would have ſerved him beſt, and who " came not with excellency of " ſpeech or of man's wiſdom, declaring the teſtimony of " God;" yea, whatever force was in his inſpired writings, ſome that were Chriſtians and teachers in his day reckoned " his bodily preſence weak, and his ſpeech contemptible." By your ſkill in eccleſiaſtic hiſtory, you can tell us, if the miniſters that the apoſtles left behind them in the churches, and who lived in the age next to them, were generally men ſkilled in the arts and ſciences of which you give us a catalogue; and if they were not for the moſt part knowing in thoſe ſciences, I have reaſon to think you will not call them a reproach to the church. Neither can I believe that you think it a reproach to the Chriſtian law-giver, that, in condeſcending on the particular qualifications of that miniſtry, which

which he inſtituted to continue to the end of the world, he does not ſo much as mention the knowledge of theſe arts and ſciences, the ignorance of which, you ſay, is a reproach to any church. And therefore I muſt reckon you mean churches have been reproached with this ignorance of their miniſters. This is true in fact: the "diſputers of the world" laughed at the preaching of the goſpel, till there came up a philoſophical miniſtry: but then they departed from the "ſimplicity that "is in Chriſt, and corrupted" the goſpel, and ſo they gained that eſteem in the world which they could not have "till "the glory departed" from them. If it be your mind, that your expectants ſhould avoid the old reproach, and ſeek that eſteem which has come in place of it, by qualifying themſelves for the miniſtry with theſe ſciences; it is my mind, on the other hand, that theſe illiterate miniſters ſhould be content it be perceived "they are unlearned and ignorant "men," and to be called babblers, that God's name may be "excellent, in ordaining ſtrength out of the mouth of babes," while "he confounds the wiſdom of the wiſe," and, "by the "fooliſhneſs of preaching, ſaves them that believe."

After all that you have ſaid of the neceſſity of theſe ſciences, are you well ſkilled in them yourſelf? And if you be, is it not a great neglect in you, that the ſouls of your people are not entertained with that knowledge? I only wonder, that when you commend ſo many arts, wherein you have not inſtructed your people, and wherein few have perceived you to be very knowing, you have not mentioned the politics, or rather that which by itſelf poſſeſſes the name *art?* I plead for a room to this in your catalogue of ſciences; becauſe it is, at leaſt, as neceſſary to a governor of your church as any of them: for at no time was it governed without it; yea, you know how uſeful it is to you in the conduct of your flock in Dundee. All your collections from your orthodox books, in the diſputes you have had with Epiſcopals and Independents, and your collections from practical writers and the ſermons of your brethren, will not manifeſt you to be ſo far above the illiterate in the knowledge of human arts and ſciences, as you are in *art.* The very riſe of that ſect of which you now complain, was owing to your *art,* as one mean in the hand of holy Providence, and after an application of all your *art* in the riſe of that ſect, your ſilence and forbearance of open oppoſition to it, was a piece of *art,* that, for ought I know, you learned from Julian: for no man will believe it was intended for the proſperity of that

ſect, any more than his forbearance to the ſect that differed from his eſtabliſhed church was intended for the proſperity of that ſect. And now that you have broke ſilence again, there is certainly *art* in that alſo. There is more art than reaſoning in what you ſay againſt the illiterate miniſters; and I fear it is not ſo much your meaning, that the people's ſouls ſhould be entertained with the ſciences of which you ſpeak, as that they ſhould be fed with the fancy that you have them, and ſo are only capable to teach them ſcripture-knowledge; and that, being ignorant of thoſe mighty ſciences, they may not dare to differ from your gloſſes on the ſcripture, nor hearken to illiterate men, who, for want of the ſciences, cannot explain the ſcriptures. Theſe illiterate miniſters, if letters could do their buſineſs, have far more need of them than you, who are already in the eſteem of the multitude far wiſer than you really are, and who, according to your own principles, can never have much uſe for philoſophy and criticiſm in confuting heretics: for you know you have no more to do, but to ſit down in a preſbytery or ſynod, and vote againſt hereſy, and then call on the magiſtrate to extirpate it, or root out the heretics; whereas the illiterate have nothing but the word of God, and if they cannot manage that, as it is "mighty "through God," and not through the ſciences, they can do nothing. Yet if they prevail in the leaſt againſt error, God will have more honour than in thoſe that need leſs dependence on him, and uſe means to keep themſelves off from that dependence; and if the fruits of their miniſtry in Angus, and the works of their diſciples be compared with yours, it may poſſibly appear, that the word of God alone is "the "power of God to ſalvation," and that there is no reaſon "to be aſhamed of it," without your ſciences.

You tell us, that, for acquiring theſe arts and ſciences, there ought to be ſchools of learning, as there were ſchools of the prophets of old. But were theſe arts and ſciences taught in the ſchools of the prophets of old? And do you imagine that your expectants and young preachers are the ſucceſſors of the young prophets, and you, or the teachers of the ſciences, the ſucceſſors of the old ones? And if paſtors and teachers be to be trained up in ſchools, as were the prophets, what ſchools do you read of for them in the New Teſtament, but the churches of the ſaints? The pure "word of "God ſounded out" at firſt from the churches; but the firſt hereſies came in from the ſchools of the Jewiſh ſcribes, and from the ſchools of the Heathen philoſophers; and the firſt Chriſtian

Chriſtian ſchool at Alexandria produced Arianiſm. When the miniſtry of the goſpel came to be attended with worldly honour and gain, all that ſought to be employed in it for the ſake of theſe, were not fitted by Jeſus Chriſt to "be paſtors "and teachers," and his gift alone, though ſufficient for its end, was not ſufficient to bear them out in the figure they behoved to make in the world, as the ſucceſſors of the Heathen prieſts: and therefore they behoved to have ſuch qualifications as could be attained the ſame way that men attain qualifications for other worldly employments. Thus men came to be miniſters of the goſpel as they came to be lawyers and phyſicians. The Heathens at firſt ridiculed Chriſtianity; but as it grew upon them, in ſpite of all the methods that uſe to be taken with ſuch as are not to be reaſoned with, they began to exerciſe their ſkill in diſputing againſt it. This proved a temptation to ſuch Chriſtians as had letters, to lay aſide the old "weapons," that were mighty "through God for caſting down imaginations, and every "high thought exalting itſelf againſt the knowledge of "Chriſt," and contend with "carnal weapons," or oppoſe the "wiſdom of words," and defend the goſpel againſt it, by "the wiſdom of words." But inſtead of maintaining the cauſe of the goſpel this way, they in effect gave it up, and corrupted the doctrine of Chriſt, by an endeavour to reconcile it as much as might be to the "wiſdom of the diſputer "of this world." Thus the goſpel became a ſcience, inſtead of a "word of faith," and the old difference betwixt theſe two, ſtated by the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. i. & ii. was in a great meaſure done away. And thus, "as Satan beguiled Eve through "his ſubtilty, their minds were corrupted from the ſimpli-"city that is in Chriſt." This went on, and continues to this day, under all the various ſhapes of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, where-ever expectants, as you call them, inſtead of "holding faſt the faithful word in teaching, that they "may be able by ſound doctrine both to exhort and con-"vince the gainſayers," are profeſſors of oppoſitions of ſcience falſely ſo called, or of polemic divinity.

When you have ſtated the opinion and practice of the ſect lately riſen among us, you make a ſuppoſition, that the devil ſhould ſtir up Arians, Socinians, and Deiſts, to attack our holy religion. This ſuppoſition may be allowed; for it is matter of fact, books written by men of letters againſt the faith of the Son of God, and againſt the truth of Chriſtianity, are in the hands of your people, and taking with them,

them. Infidelity is growing and ſpreading apace; and the courſe of the world that has been in the channel of ſuperſtition, under the Chriſtian name, to the great diſhonour of that name, (from the days of Conſtantine, but eſpecially from the time the clergy came up as the "eighth head" of the Roman empire, and "the ten kings gave their power to "the beaſt to make one opinion"), is now turning into the channel of Infidelity, to the great grief of the clergy of all ſorts; becauſe it ſhakes their throne, and fills their kingdom with darkneſs. When you have laid down your ſuppoſition, you propoſe your argument in a queſtion, *What could ſuch men do to defend it?* And they will perhaps inquire again, ſeeing your temporal intereſt and your authority in the world lies at the ſtake, What are you doing to defend it? Men of letters, both in the church of England and your church, have been writing defences; but what have any of your ſect in this church offered that is worth the reading? You can in your manner find fault with the writers for Chriſtianity, and charge them with betraying the cauſe, while you cannot ſay it is through their want of letters. You contend for the evidence that the teſtimony of God in the goſpel carries in itſelf, and is beheld by them whoſe underſtandings he opens to underſtand the ſcriptures, and behold that evidence in them, and you do well. But is that evidence to be ſeen only in the original Hebrew and Greek text? Or could they at Rome perceive it, where I ſuppoſe Paul ſpoke it in Latin to the Romans, as they of Athens did, to whom I ſuppoſe he ſpoke Greek? And could the Greeks perceive any evidence in his references to the Old Teſtament, which he cited to them in Greek, as did theſe to whom he ſpoke in the Hebrew tongue? Next tell us, is this evidence that the word of God in the ſcriptures carries in itſelf, to be perceived only by the "ſcribes and diſ-"puters of this world," the critics, philoſophers, aſtronomers, mathematicians, polemic divines, geographers, hiſtorians, *&c.?* Or alſo by the "babes," the "fooliſh, baſe "things of this world?" And is it to be communicated to others by "the wiſdom of words, or in that plain ſimple manner wherein it is declared in the ſcriptures? Then let us underſtand what advantage you have here with your letters beyond the illiterate? We are ſtill at a loſs to know what you can do to defend the Chriſtian doctrine by your letters againſt the adverſaries. What adverſary have you baffled? Or whom have you converted by the power of your learning, or otherwiſe, from Socinianiſm, Arianiſm, or Deiſm? You have had

Infidels

Infidels to deal with in Dundee; but what did you, beyond raiſing an uſe of lamentation in the pulpit, and telling them in private, that they ſhould be hanged? An illiterate man would have taken another courſe; he would have plainly told them the evidence that he himſelf ſaw in the goſpel, and how the atheiſm and infidelity of his own heart was quelled by the word of God; and if he prevailed not, he would pray for them, and ſhew them the truth of Chriſtianity in his life, and even in deeds of good-will to them; while, at the ſame time, he would ſuffer no member of the Chriſtian ſociety, wherein he is concerned, to lead a life of contradiction to any part of the goſpel, but "take heed to himſelf, and the "whole flock," to have "a converſation becoming the go-"ſpel." This is the ſect lately riſen, againſt which you ſeem ſo much diſpleaſed; but why ſhould it diſpleaſe you, that, while there are ſo many of you trained up in letters, and well hired to defend your goſpel, a ſet of people ſhould engage in this way of the defence of Chriſtianity againſt their worldly intereſt? Or what kind of men are ye, that neither defend Chriſtianity yourſelves, nor ſuffer the defence that either the literate or illiterate are offering to it?

Next, you inquire how they would do with Jeſuits? to which they will readily anſwer, even the ſame they do with you, while you ſubvert the goſpel "of the kingdom of hea-"ven" in many inſtances, and miſlead the people. Your little ſtories and your arguings in the mouths of your agents, come to their hand. They ſee through your arts and diſguiſes, they diſcover the fallacies of your arguings by the word of God, they maintain the truth of that word, and ſet ſome of your miſled people right; ſo would they do with Jeſuits.

You put their anſwer to your queſtions in the ſhape of an objection. O, ſay they, we have the word to oppoſe them; which is not ill ſaid. But what is your anſwer to this objection?

Had there not, ſay you, been men of learning before you to have tranſlated it, you even would not had that. Well, they have it; and I hope you do not grudge them this, as your fathers of the Roman church did, when the Lord, in his marvellous providence, brought the ſcriptures to light in the languages of the nations. The illiterate adore the wiſdom, goodneſs, and power of God in this, as they do in the firſt publication of the goſpel by the gift of tongues, before it was written, and likewiſe in the writing of it. And from this

this ſaying of yours, they have reaſon to think, that if you had been a clergyman, when it began to be tranſlated into the modern languages, you had at leaſt refuſed to uſe your learning that way, for fear of the conſequence and the danger that might come to the church thereby. The ſect of which you complain do not as you here inſinuate, decry the knowledge of the languages that is neceſſary for tranſlating the Bible, as they do not decry the art of printing, without which, you men of letters would have laboured under a vaſt diſadvantage; but as they will not ſay that no man but a printer can be a miniſter, neither dare they affirm, that none but a tranſlator is fit for that office. They ſuppoſe a man may be capable to tranſlate the Bible, and yet not qualified for the miniſtry, as the word of God directs, as another may be qualified for that office according to the ſcriptures, and yet know the word of God only in his own native language. The reading of the ſcriptures was much attended to in the firſt churches, and they could not all hear or know them, without being read to them; ſo they had readers who were not miniſters, fitter for that than for the miniſtry; yea, and perhaps fitter for reading than the miniſters themſelves: for no doubt you can inform us by your ſkill in hiſtory, if there were not miniſters in the firſt churches that could neither read nor write. But do you in earneſt affirm, that none are fit for the miniſtry but ſuch as are capable to tranſlate the Bible? And if you do, are you perſuaded that yourſelf is a miniſter, or many more with you, who content themſelves with as much knowledge of the Hebrew for ordinary as carries them through their trials? I remember of a letter that came to your preſbytery from one for whoſe miniſtry you had not a great regard, but he was a noble Hebrean. He inſulted the reverend preſbytery, by writing to them the words of a language which they were ſuppoſed to know, and he underſtood they knew not, and that was the Hebrew. This was a reflection upon them full as ſevere as any you have made on the men that are willing it be perceived they are unlearned and ignorant men. Further, you know how many of you are ruſted as to the little knowledge you had of the Greek Teſtament when you came off the irons. And are your conſciences ſo far ſeared, as not to give you the leaſt uneaſineſs, when you make your people believe, that others cannot be miniſters for the want of that knowledge of the ſacred languages which you yourſelves leaſt of all ſtudy?

Then

Then you inquire, what they would anſwer a Jeſuit, when he ſays the paſſage is not juſtly tranſlated? For it ſeems, though they have unhappily got that weapon, the word of God, in their hands, you ſtill hope they have not ſkill to uſe it; and your hope is founded in what you propoſe by way of queſtion to them. But how would you, though well ſkilled in the languages, defend your people againſt that Jeſuit, that have not letters, and are not capable to judge of what is ſaid of the juſtneſs of the tranſlation by the knowledge of the language? What could you anſwer him, to the ſatisfaction of your people's conſciences, that an illiterate man could not anſwer? And ſeeing you have taken up the Jeſuitical argument, for the honour of the church and the clergy, againſt theſe illiterate men, and their Engliſh Bible, could you blame any of your people that ſhould go off to the Roman church, becauſe they know not if the tranſlation be juſt; and when the queſtion came, whether they ſhould believe you or the learned Jeſuit, a clergyman of a more ancient church, in the knowledge of letters, with a pretence of infallibility, they choſed to believe the Jeſuit? You know the ſtrongeſt thing you have to ſay in this caſe againſt the Jeſuit, is what the illiterate may ſay as well as you. Or, are you indeed for the people's believing in your church, inſtead of their Engliſh Bible? Or, perhaps you'll come next to a queſtion, if a man can be ſaved without ſkill in the ſacred languages, yea, without the original manuſcripts? And clergymen have played the like of this, to keep ſouls in dependence on their authority.

But if theſe illiterate leaders be ſo ignorant of the word of God, their only weapon, and unable to uſe it, why do not you men of letters, by your ability to handle the word againſt them, reduce the people that are miſled by them to your obedience? And if you be not able to do that, why do you proclaim your own ſhame, by crying your church is in danger from men that want letters?

Your deſcription of the New-Teſtament miniſter comes not well in immediately after your diſcourſe of the neceſſity of the arts and ſciences to the miniſtry of the goſpel: for it will agree full as well to the illiterate as to men of letters. It is true, your deſcription is deficient, as to a main part of the character of ſuch a miniſter, which cannot be declared, without ſuch an underſtanding of the difference betwixt the Old Teſtament and the New, as you might learn from the illiterate men, the preachers of the kingdom of heaven. You

ſpeak of a New-Teſtament miniſter his making Chriſt all, and ſelf nothing; and yet you train up your young Chriſtians, by the queſtions you put to them, in the way of ſelf. For an illiterate man would eaſily ſee him that could readily anſwer them as they are propoſed, to be a ſelf-righteous Phariſee, and leaning, through ſelf-conceit, on the good diſpoſitions expreſſed in your queſtions, inſtead of the good pleaſure of God's goodneſs, and ſetting up to be a Chriſtian, in the confidence of a good diſpoſition toward it that he finds in his heart. You propoſe a great many things to your catechumen, who may be ignorant of the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, which are but ſuppoſed in your queſtions, and yet anſwer theſe queſtions; which he may alſo do without having the word of God for the only rule of his Chriſtianity. And yet theſe queſtions contain a covenant, which you ſay he muſt make with God. And who are you that would give us another covenant, and another miniſtry, than that we have in the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament?

It is not my province to point out the inconſiſtencies of your ſermon, in the things you offer againſt your brethren. That belongs to them, if they think it worth their while to take any notice of you. But if no other regard you, I hope you will accept of this, as a piece of ſervice done to you, and the truth which you oppoſe, by,

SIR,

Your well-wiſher,

and humble ſervant,

Edinburgh, January 8.
1734. JOHN GLAS.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

Take the following copy of a ſummons from the ſeſſion of one of your brethren, as an evidence of the ſucceſs of your preaching to them againſt illiterate miniſters. You need not queſtion if it be the effect of your warning, when you conſider how much ear he gave to your firſt warning, and how active he was upon it in the riſe of that ſect, which, to your great grief, is lately riſen among you. And you ſee him as ſenſible of his own call and miſſion, and of the neceſſity of human arts and ſciences in the miſſion to the office of the miniſtry, as you can deſire, and as far from joining iſſue with Julian as you could wiſh.

Ketins, the ſixteenth day of December One thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty-three years.

THE ſaid day the kirk-ſeſſion conſidering, That, by the wholeſome conſtitutions of this national church, and by the word of God itſelf, no man ought to intrude into the ſacred office of the miniſtry, without being called and ſent of God; nor ought they to be received into Chriſtian houſes, nor bid God ſpeed: Yet it is of verity, that you Alexander Morice weaver in the Gaſk, in this pariſh, upon the 30th day of November, have invited, welcomed to your houſe, and bidden God ſpeed to Don and Cant, pretended preachers, and encouraged them to make a ſhew of preaching, upon one or other of the days of this preſent month, in the barn of Patrick Ritchie in Paty, and this pariſh, as common fame goes; for which, if found true, you ought to be cenſured according to the demerit of your ſcandal. Extracted by,

ROB. CHRISTIE, Seſſ. Clk.

I James Watſon officer, by warrant from the above kirk-ſeſſion, ſummon you Alexander Morice, to compear before the kirk-ſeſſion Sabbath next, the 30th inſtant, to anſwer to the points of the above libel, with certification. This I give you December 21. 1733.

J. W.

A Dissertation on INCEST.

A dispute between Mr Glas and the presbytery of Dundee, concerning the lawfulness of J. B.'s marriage with J. M. his former wife's grand-niece, in 1729.

[First published in the year 1730.]

Mr Glas's reasons for the lawfulness of this marriage.

IT is manifest this marriage is upon none of these degrees expressly mentioned in the Levitical law, and more fully laid open in the common table, where the several instances upon the degrees of nearness of kindred and affinity are pointed out. When the Lord takes notice of the abominations of the Heathen in this matter of incest, for which he took vengeance on them, and with which he severely discharges his people to defile themselves; and when he makes so particular a condescension on the several degrees, and explains this his law in no other part of his word; and when he makes this a case of life and death; it seems an inference very just from this, That he hath left it free for any man to marry in any degree beyond these mentioned in the law.

Yet whatever is by just and necessary consequence deducible from God's law, is certainly in it; and therefore every such consequence must have some foundation in the law itself. And if there be any thing in the Levitical law that leads us to see a marriage unlawful upon that degree whereon J. B.'s marriage is an instance, though that degree be not very express in the law, then they who thus see it in the law must declare it unlawful, though it be really unlawful whether they see it or not: but, at the same time, it will not be easily thought, that the Lord made the life and death of the people of his kingdom to depend on a point not obvious in his law.

Now, let us see if we find any thing in the law of God upon

on this ſubject, from which we may infer the unlawfulneſs of marriage upon that degree whereon J. B.'s marriage is an inſtance.

And, 1. The law ſpeaks not of that diſtinction of the lines direct, collateral, and oblique, which men have uſed in the explication of it, and for giving a ready up taking of the different degrees. And no reaſon can be given why the expreſs prohibition goes not ſo far downward upon the oblique line as upon the direct, if we have not recourſe to the reaſon mentioned in the law; or why there is but one degree forbidden expreſsly upon the oblique line, and but one upon the collateral, while there are as it were two (though they be but upon the matter one, as we ſhall ſee) upon the direct line, eſpecially if we conſider that it is far more eaſy by nature's light to make an inference from one generation to another upon the direct line, than upon the oblique or collateral. The preſbytery ſeems to labour under a groſs miſtake, in confounding the direct line and the oblique, reckoning, that, as they draw or fancy a line from the brother to his brother's daughter through his brother, ſo there is ſuch a real derivation of blood from that brother to his brother's daughter, as there is from her grandfather to her upon the direct line: and by this chimerical fancy, to which their line leads them, they muſt hold a higher degree of inceſt in the marriage of uncle and niece, than in the marriage of a brother and ſiſter upon the collateral line; whereas the nearneſs of brother and ſiſter in blood is beyond all poſſibility of contradiction preſuppoſed unto the nearneſs of uncle and niece.

2. It is evident there is no room left in this law of God for drawing inferences, by taking the words or names of the related perſons in ſtricter or larger ſenſes: for though there be ſuch words made uſe of in this law, as occurs in other places of ſcripture, in a larger ſenſe; yet that ſenſe is plainly excluded in this law. And we had been left at the utmoſt uncertainty if it had been otherwiſe, as we may ſee by this inſtance, Lev. xviii. 9. "The nakedneſs of thy ſiſter, the "daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, born "at home or abroad, their nakedneſs thou ſhalt not uncover." If we take father and ſiſter, and daughter of the father, in ſuch a ſenſe as they frequently bear in ſcripture, it will be unlawful for, not couſin-germans only, but for their children and children's children ſtill downwards, to marry together; and ſo no marriage, even in the collateral way, will be at all lawful: for if any man deſcended of the one couſin

ſhould

should marry a woman descended of the other, he would in that case uncover the nakedness of his sister, the daughter of his father, and that in a scripture-sense of the words *father* and *sister*, and *daughter of the father*, and the same man is still the father in this sense of all that descend from on both the lines, which are from him direct, and so are all that stand upon these lines collaterally to one another still sons and daughters of the same father, and brothers and sisters in the scripture-sense of the word: but in this law the Lord keeps close to the strictest sense of the words, as we see ℣ 10. The words *son* and *daughter* stand in their strictest sense, and the largest sense is avoided. "The nakedness of thy son's daugh-"ter, or of thy daughter's daughter." Just so, ℣ 14. the sense of the word *aunt* is expressly determined, "Thou shalt "not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother; thou "shalt not approach to his wife, she is thine aunt." The presbytery have thought, that, seeing this is the reason of the prohibition that she is his aunt, this word must carry farther import than father's sister; and what should that be? It is this, as they declare, As she is the aunt of her husband's immediate nephew, her niece, so she is an aunt to her grand-niece, and all in a direct line downward. And this is their authoritative sense of the reason for a man's not approaching to his father's brother's wife. It should not be thought, that they are imagining the Bible was at first written in our language; and yet, even in our language, the *aunt* simply and the *grand-aunt* are different designations, and different persons; and the *aunt* will never make *grand-aunt*, unless we put *grand* to it: nor should it be thought, that this presbytery is casting about to fetch in an old Popish notion into a Protestant church, That persons should not marry in such a relation as has a common name given to it. But as this their interpretation of the reason of this prohibition is wholly beside the plain mind of the law-giver, and founded upon their sense of an English word: so it is most evident, that the reason the lawgiver there points out for a man's not approaching to his father's brother's wife, is, seeing that husband and wife stands for the same thing throughout this law, as being one flesh, she is the same thing to him as his father's brother, whose nakedness her's is, and she is so to him, his father's sister or his aunt. This is very clear in the text, which says, a man uncovers the nakedness of his father's brother by approaching to his wife; and was it possible for the presbytery to overlook this, and give another sense, if they had not been

in

in the greatest haste to condemn J. B.? Thus aunt here, as in other places, is still father's sister, Exod. vi. 20. Numb. xxvi. 29. And if it signify cousin-german in these places, according to the mind of some interpreters, then the reason hereby fetched into the Levitical law upon incest makes cousin-germans unfit for marriage.

3. Neither does this law make the least use of the notion of parentage, but in the strictest sense. We have heard how it expresses the relation betwixt the grandfather and grandchild, and gives such a reason for the prohibition, even in that law, as leaves not room for a general notion of parentage to come into this law; and as it meddles not with any general notion of parentage, so it makes no manner of use of the notion of superiority and inferiority. It forbids equals (brother and sister) to marry, but not on the account of their equality. It forbids superiors and inferiors (the begetting parent and child, and child's child, and the uncle and niece) to marry: but not on the account of the superiority or inferiority. The wise lawgiver goes more strictly to work than to insist in this case upon a general notion, that, if it were followed, would take in innumerable marriages that have no manner of concern with the subject of this law, or the reason of it, such as all marriages betwixt tutors and pupils, magistrates and subjects, masters and servants, elder and younger, ministers and people, learned and unlearned. And if this general notion of parentage and superiority should be restricted to the affair of kindred and affinity, it would still be unlawful for one cousin german, or his wife, to marry the other cousin-german's child or grandchild, upon the direct line still downward, as the presbytery speaks. But if the general notion of parentage and superiority must yet be further restrained unto great nearness of kin, then that general notion is dwindled away into a particular, and the stress leans on great nearness of kin, the Lord's own reason: but who shall determine that nearness of kin to us, if it be not he who can say, "I am the Lord?" He does indeed determine it: but not a syllable speaks he in this law of a general notion of parentage, or of superiority or inferiority. The civil law, as it stood when Antichrist was growing to his height, forbids the grand-uncle to marry his grand-niece; for this reason, because he is unto her in place of a parent. And these foreign divines, who, by their circumstances in the countries and times wherein they lived, have been induced to explain the law of God by Justinian's law, have themselves observed a difference between

tween that law and the law of God in this caſe, and have been obliged to ſtrain exceeding hard to reconcile the commentary with the text; but they might have ſaved their pains if they had conſidered, that Chriſtians made no bonds in thoſe days of carrying points wherein the divine authority claimed a concern, much farther than God's law carried them.

4. And as little does the law of God make any mention of a reaſon taken from the removal of the relation from a forbidden degree on the one ſide, but not on the other. It is the true relation of brother and ſiſter is a forbidden degree, and the law forbids the marriage of uncle and niece, where the relation is removed upon one ſide, but not on the other, and leaves it free to couſin-germans, where the relation is removed on both ſides: but does it inſinuate this reaſon, taken from the difference which we obſerve betwixt theſe two caſes? nothing like it; but declares another expreſsly, which will carry the thing no further than the Lord himſelf carries it, who ſtops on both hands where there is an equal diſtance of relation, that is, where there is an equal number of perſons intervening. And why ſhould God's own reaſon be neglected in this caſe, and another put in place of it, which he never once points to, and which carries the thing farther than it can go upon the reaſon he gives? And it is here to be obſerved, that, in the caſe of couſin germans, the relation is removed only upon one ſide, from the forbidden degree of uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew, and ſtands on the other. Though there be no uſe made of the foreſaid things in the law of God upon inceſt, yet we muſt conſider how this law of his ſtands, and if any thing ſhall be found in it from which the unlawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage can be inferred, let it be declared unlawful.

The following obſervations upon this law may ſerve to clear this matter to unprejudiced minds.

1. The reaſon given in the introduction is preciſely this, Lev. xviii. 6. "None of you ſhall approach to any that is "near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedneſs; I am the "Lord." Here the Lord lays the nearneſs of kin for a foundation to all the following prohibitions, which are his explications upon this general, and are all built upon this foundation; and then he declares his ſovereign authority as the abſolute Lord and Lawgiver, and thereupon calls for obedience, and proceeds to determine by that his authority what is that nearneſs of kin. If he had reſted in the general, and left us to determine in that matter of the nearneſs

neſs of kin, we had been in the greateſt uncertainty, and our conſciences had been perplexed with numberleſs fancies and reaſonings of our own about it, as is evident from the various reaſons men have imagined to themſelves againſt marriage, in the degrees he forbids, which reaſons he never once points to, and from the Popiſh fancies about near kin; but becauſe he knew we would be ready either to ſtop too ſhort, or elſe proceed too far, in fixing the bounds where death ſhould lie on the one ſide, and life on the other, he takes the matter ſo in his own hand, as to make the men guilty of a very criminal uſurpation, who ſhall take upon them by their wiſdom to determine in this matter leſs or more, than he has thought fit to determine. "I am "the Lord" has a dreadful import here, not only to the diſobedient, but alſo to them that take away or add, and interpoſe their authority where his is not interpoſed in this caſe; and this falls heavy upon the church of Rome and the Pope, who pretending to act in his name, and ſeeking to advance the intereſt and authority of that church, took upon them to forbid far beyond what he forbids. But this land is mercifully delivered from that Antichriſtian authority in this point; and the law of the land renders unto God what is his own in this matter, by referring wholly to his law.

2. In the prohibitions that proceed upon this ground of the nearneſs of kin, the Lord puts the huſband and wife for the ſame thing, and ſpeaks of their nakedneſs as one and the ſame, they being "no more twain, but one fleſh. The na- "kedneſs of thy father's wife is thy father's nakedneſs, the "nakedneſs of thy brother's wife is thy brother's nakedneſs; "thy father's brother's wife is thy father's ſiſter, or thine "aunt, ſaith the Lord:" And ſo he that marries his wife's brother's daughter, doth the ſame thing in this caſe as if he married his own brother's daughter; and the like might be ſaid of his brother's grand-daughter, if the law had forbidden that far down, or in that degree; for we can make no further uſe of affinity here than the law does, nor can we carry it unto any degree of kin which is not there forbidden. And thus it is moſt true, that the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her huſband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own, as ſays the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter: but theſe foreign divines that follow the civil law in that notion, of them that are in the place of parents, and ſo go further

than the word of God in the case of consanguinity, yet do not seem to carry the thing so far in affinity.

3. The Lord likewise expressly makes the nakedness even of the grandchild, to be unto the grandfather his own nakedness, in forbidding him to uncover it, ℣ 10. "The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, their nakedness thou shalt not uncover; for their's is thine own nakedness."

Thus, though there be not so many persons between the grandfather and his grandchild, as between the uncle and the nice; yet the reason given for the prohibition upon this direct line carries further than upon the other lines, where the prohibitions go merely upon the nearness of kin.

It has been said against the Papists, that marriage with the children of grandchildren is not forbidden expressly, for this reason, because it is not a supposable case, (and truly it is far less supposable than a marriage with a brother's grandchild, which is not expressly forbidden, as a marriage with a man's own grandchild is), yet it is altogether needless and unreasonable to seek any other reason for the thing, when there is a sufficient reason evidently given in the law itself; which reason makes it plainly as unlawful for persons to uncover the nakedness of the grandchildren of their grandchildren, whose nakedness is their own nakedness, as for a man to uncover the nakedness of the grandchildren of his wife, whose nakedness is his own: so marriage with the grandchildren of a person whose nakedness is declared in the law to be our own, is expressly made unlawful to us in this law: and as the Lord does not mention this reason in forbidding upon the direct line, till he came down to the grandchild, so in the same sense wherein it can be said, that a man's grandchild's nakedness is his own, in that same very sense all that descend from him, and to whom blood is derived from him, their nakedness is his own. This the prohibition is perpetual upon the direct line: And thus far the law of nature, as known to them destitute of revelation, goes clearly along with the revealed law; and this that the Lord says of a man's own nakedness is a clear explication of the law of nature.

But now the nakedness of them lineally descended from a person, is declared by the Lord to be the person's own nakedness, and that only unto the person from whom they are so descended, and unto the purpose of debarring the uncovering of nakedness between them. And as the Lord has thus stated it, so we cannot carry it further; neither does it indeed

deed hold in other cases: For, 1. It cannot be thus said, that the persons lineally descended from one brother, their nakedness is the other brother's own nakedness from whom they are not all descended, and of whose flesh they are no remainder in any sense but in the sense of nearness of kin. And if the niece could not marry the uncle, because her nakedness is her father's, who is his brother, and so she is the same thing to him as his brother; then by the same reason she could not marry her uncle's son, or grandson, or any upon that direct line downwards, as the presbytery speaks, seeing their nakedness is still her uncle's nakedness, and so they would be the same thing to her in this case with her uncle they are indeed the same thing to him, but in no wise to her. 2. All that are lineally descended of two brothers, and of their father, are every one of them unto the brother of whom they are descended, and unto that common father, in such a manner a remainder of their flesh, as that their nakedness is their own nakedness; and if we should thus make them to stand for the same thing, as those of whom they are descended; and that with respect to one another, all marriages would be unlawful, because thereby all descended of the two brothers would be sisters and brothers to all generations, as being still the same, and that unto one another, with the first two brothers. And the absurdity of this needs not be further pointed out.

4. Therefore in the other degrees upon which the Lord forbids the uncovering of nakedness, he proceeds upon the ground of nearness of kin; and, by his sovereign authority, determines that nearness which would not be fully and clearly determined by nature's light.

And he first forbids the uncovering of nakedness betwixt a brother and a sister, begotten by the same parent, ℣ 9. 11. 16. Here the generating parent comes between; and so the parties here forbidden to uncover nakedness, are at a greater distance of kin than they who are discharged to come together, because of the fore-mentioned "own nakedness," ℣ 7. 8. 10. 15. 17. yet not at such a distance but that the Lord declares them too near of kin to come together, there being but one between: and so it is unlawful for any person to uncover the nakedness of her who is nearest to the person that is nearest to him. He proceeds yet a degree farther, and forbids the uncovering of nakedness betwixt the brother or sister of the begetting parent, and the child of that parent, ℣ 12. 13. 14. This prohibition goes expressly upon

the nearness of kin, and this is justly reckoned the lowest of the degrees forbidden in this law; for here there come more between these forbidden to come together than in the case of brother and sister, *viz.* 1*st*, The begetting parent of the niece or nephew. 2*dly*, The parent that begat that parent and his brother or sister; so that there come two between; yet hereby they are not set at such a distance but that the Lord still declares them too near to come together; and so it is unlawful for any persons to come together, where the distance of kin betwixt them is only by two intervening. Here the Lord stops, and further he goes not, who says, "I "am the Lord." And it is most observable, that though there be not the same distance between the brother and sister, as there is betwixt the uncle and niece; yet he stops directly there, where the distance is precisely equal, by an equal number of persons intervening betwixt these whom he forbids not, and so allows to come together in marriage. Thus we find an equal number of persons parents coming between two cousins-germans, and between the uncle and his grand-niece, and both are set at the same distance of kin, by the precise number of three persons coming between each of them.

And who shall declare to us, that a marriage in this distance of kin is unlawful, when he whom it best becomes to say, "I am the Lord," and must be owned best to understand the matter, hath left it free?

We may fancy a thousand things to ourselves, and the most grave and learned divines, the most wise and able lawyers may give what judgment they think best; but while none of them can say, "I am the Lord," though we be bound to pay all due deference to their judgment; yet they must point out something in this law of God, from which, as stated there, a clear inference may be made, shewing, That he hath indeed forbidden J. B.'s marriage before they can warrantably declare him a transgressor of this law of God; and if it be manifest, as it is, by what is above said, that J. B.'s marriage is upon a degree farther than the farthest, and lower than the lowest degree forbidden in the word of God, to which the law of this land does very justly refer as to the safest explication of the law of nature, and that in opposition to Antichrist, who shews himself that he is God remarkably in this point, then it must be owned, that the law of God and of this land hath made his marriage lawful; and if his wife and he be lawfully married, can any man on earth put them asunder?

Answers

Answers by the presbytery of Dundee to the reasons for the lawfulness of J. B.'s marriage.

THE inconclusiveness and falsehood of these reasons will appear from a view of the nature of nearness of kin or nearness of blood, to which all the said reasonings refer. Nearness of kin or nearness of blood has its foundation in, and rises from some family from which the persons near of kin to one another are descended, or their nearness to the persons from whom they are descended, *et vice versa*; or from affinity by marriage, parents then being one flesh, and so one blood, all their children, though they be said to be the first degree descended from them, yet they are really parts of the parents, and of the same unmixed blood with them; likewise the person who marries any child of a family, is by that affinity just as he was a son of the family, and is reckoned by the divine law to have the same nearness of kin to the parents and to the other children of the family. And that this is the true and genuine nature of nearness of kin will appear from Lev. xviii. where the Lord expressly forbids such and such relations to marry, because they are so near of kin to one another. And,

1*st*, A man is forbidden to marry, or to uncover the nakedness of any that has their whole blood of that family from which he is descended, or reckoned to have it by being married to one that has their whole blood of that family, *viz.* to uncover the nakedness of his mother, in the 7th verse; of his father's wife, though not his mother, in the 8th; of his sister, in the 9th; of his aunt, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th.

2*dly*, A man is forbidden to marry any descended of himself, or to uncover their nakedness, in ℣ 10.; and the same is implied in ℣ 7. where the grandchildren are only named in ℣ 10.; yet the reason added in the close of the verse, "For "theirs is thine own nakedness," shews, that the prohibition is extended to the remotest descendents; and this the framers of J. B.'s paper have thought fit to own. Again, in like manner, a man is forbidden to "uncover the nakedness" of any descended of his wife in ℣ 17. because he and she being one flesh and one blood, therefore her descendents are reckoned to him as his own; and *vice versa*, all these descendents are forbidden to uncover the nakedness of any from whom they are descended, or of them who are married, or have been married to any from whom they are descended.

And,

And, *lastly*, A man is forbidden to uncover the nakedness of a person who is or hath been married to one that has his whole blood of that family of which he is descended, in ℣ 8. 14. 15. 16.; in all which prohibitions it is to be observed, that either both the persons have their whole blood of the same family, or that one of the persons hath in him their whole blood of that family from whom the other is descended: or, lastly, that one of the persons is or has been married to one that had his whole blood of that family from which the other is descended, and so the person that has thus been one flesh with one that had his whole blood, is reckoned by affinity to have the whole blood in himself. Now this last case is the case of J. B.; for he having been married to J. L. is reckoned to have the same relation to J. M. that J. L. had; and seeing J. L. had her whole blood of J. L. her father's family, by consequence J. B cannot lawfully marry J. M. who is descended of the family of J. L. of which J. L. was daughter, and therefore had her whole blood of that family. From what is said, the vanity of the reasoning in p. 483. about the terms *direct line*, *collateral lines*, and *oblique lines*, will appear; for all these terms are relative and useful in explaining this subject; and the presbytery has not (as is alledged) confounded the direct line with the collateral or oblique, but have only showed, that J. B being as a son of J. L.'s family, and consequently as deriving his whole blood from it, and J. M. being descended of the same family, he in the first degree, she in the third, though both the lines, his and hers, are direct with respect to him from whom they are descended; yet they are oblique to one another. As to what is said of this being but one degree forbidden on the collateral, and one on the oblique, and two on the direct: As to the direct, it is owned, in the close of the paper that though there be but two expressly named, yet the prohibition is perpetual; and therefore it is false that is said here, that there are but two forbidden: as to the collateral lines, persons in the second degree may marry, *viz.* a grandson by one son or daughter of a family, may marry a grand-daughter by another son or daughter; for, as they are grandchildren of that family, so each of them is grandchild to another family, and so deriving the one half of their blood from that family, and the other half from another, they may marry: but, on the oblique line, the person being a son or daughter, or married to a son or daughter of the family from which the other person is descended, that son or son-in-law deriving, or reckoned

ed as deriving his whole blood from that family, and the other deriving part of his blood from that same family, there is more blood betwixt them than betwixt cousin-germans, which are the nearest in blood that can marry. From what is said above, the measure which is alledged for knowing nearness in blood, *viz.* by the number of persons intervening betwixt them, is false; for no number of persons going between can make it lawful for persons on the direct line to marry, nor yet on the oblique, as above.

Further, that of parentage in the direct line, *et loco parentis* in the oblique, is necessary and certain; and therefore what is alledged by divines of this being a secondary reason of the prohibition is founded in the very nature of the thing; and all that is said by the framers of J. B.'s paper against its being a reason of the prohibition, in any sense, is idle and frivolous. As to what is said of the terms of this law in Lev. xviii. & xx. their being taken to be in a proper sense, it is answered, The words here, as in all other parts of the scripture, have a determinate sense and meaning, and are not to be extended further than is intended by the Holy Ghost; yet when it is evident, by the nature of the thing spoken of in this law, that they are not restricted, as the framers of this paper would have the latter clause of ℣ 14. the reason of taking it in a large sense being as evident as the reason for taking the latter of ℣ 10. in a large sense, which they themselves do; and it is strange to find men so bold to diminish the meaning of the divine law, or to take from it, when, at the same time, they are so liberal in their insinuating judgments against those that add to it; and the presbytery are not singular in taking the last clause of ℣ 14. in a large sense, but have the concurrence of all divines and lawyers agreeing with them in this opinion: and as to the consequence which is drawn from it, that it would make all marriages unlawful, it is altogether groundless; for this sense restricts to uncle and aunt, granduncle, great-granduncle, *&c.*; and the reason is obvious, *viz.* their nearness of kin to their nieces or nephews, the uncle, granduncle, or great-granduncle and aunts in like manner deriving their whole blood from that family, from which their nieces or grand-nieces and nephews, *&c.* derive part of their blood.

Upon the whole, it is obvious, that man and wife being taken for one and the same thing through the whole of this law about incest, as is done, and that justly, in J. B.'s paper, that the measure by which all the forbidden degrees are to be tried or judged is this one, namely, That a person who has

has in him the unmixed blood of a family, or derives his whole blood from a family, is diſcharged to marry or approach to any who derive any part of their blood from that family, and by this nearneſs of kin is eaſily known; but how the framers of this paper have ſlighted, yea oppoſed this juſt rule, and have ſubſtituted another very unjuſt and fallacious one in the room of it, is not eaſy to imagine; yea, they have ſo unwarrantably, yet boldly, aſſerted that nearneſs of kin is only to be known from the number of perſons intervening betwixt the relations in the forbidden degrees, yea to aſſert, that this is the reaſon given by the Lord, where there is not the leaſt ground of it, or foundation for it, in the divine law.

And to conclude, whatever be advanced in J. B.'s paper, to prove the lawfulneſs of a woman her marrying her grand-uncle; yet we are ſtill of the mind that it is neither agreeable to the law of God nor of nature, that a woman ſhould marry one that ſtands in place of a parent to her by right of blood.

Remarks on the preſbytery's anſwers, by Mr Glas.

THE only thing that deſerves any conſideration in theſe anſwers, is the view they give us of nearneſs of kin, and the rule they lay down for trying or judging of all the forbidden degrees, which we have thus in their own words.

"The meaſure by which all the forbidden degrees are to "be tried or judged is this one, namely, That a perſon who "has in him the unmixed blood of a family, or derives his "whole blood from a family, is diſcharged to marry, or ap-"proach to any who derive any part of their blood from "that family; and by this nearneſs of kin is eaſily known."

This is the ſum and ſubſtance of what is now advanced by the framers of the anſwers, or by the preſbytery, for taking off the force of the reaſons, ſhewing the lawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage: this runs through the whole of the anſwers, and by this the inconcluſiveneſs and falſehood of the reaſons for the lawfulneſs of the marriage appears to them. They complain that this juſt rule has been ſlighted, yea oppoſed by the framers of the reaſons, and that they have ſubſtituted another very unjuſt and fallacious one in the room of it; and they are exceedingly ſurpriſed with this conduct. But it is as uneaſy to imagine how this rule could be contemned or oppoſed by any till once it was caſt up to them. And if this rule had

had been first on the field, and had been so just as it is said to be, and then set aside by any person to set up another unjust and fallacious one in the place of it, that person had been exceedingly to blame: but this is not the case; yet if this rule now found out by the presbytery, let it be never so new, be a just one contained in God's word, and shewing the unrighteousness and falsehood of other rules set up by men, why should it not take place, and others be rejected? And therefore it must be tried.

1. Though this rule be recommended for easiness; yet, upon a little reflection, it appears to exceed in easiness: for if the propositions wherein it is set forth be true, it is by this rule easily known, that all Adam's race are so near of kin, that there can be no lawful marriage among them; for every man of that race derives his whole blood from that family, and has in him unmixed that one blood, of which all nations on the face of the earth are made. And there is no one family from which any man derives his whole blood, without mixture with another family but that family of Adam; and when a man descended of Adam marries a woman of that race, he uncovers the nakedness of one that derives not a part only, but the whole of her blood from that family. It is hoped, that no man will be surprised, that the framer of the reasons did not notice this easy rule, this measure of the nearness of kin thus stated in the divine law concerning incest.

2. If we apply this rule to J. L.'s family, the family for which it was framed, then it may be inquired, If J. L.'s son's children, in whom the presbytery says the blood is mixed, be as near of kin to J. L.'s daughter as is her brother, who, they say, has it unmixed? If they be as near of kin to her, then it will be unlawful for them to marry with her children; because they are in the very same nearness of kin to them as he that derives his whole blood from that family of which they are descended: and so by this rule it will be unlawful for cousin-germans to marry: but if they be set at a further distance from J. L.'s daughter than his son their father is, and that by the mixture of foreign blood, or by the generation, then are not their children again set at another degree of distance from J. L.'s daughter by another mixture of blood, or by another generation? And if so, then does not every mixture of blood or generation make a new and further degree of distance, betwixt a person that has the blood of a family unmixed, and them that derive a part of their blood from that family? How then can this be the one

meaſure, by which all the forbidden degrees are to be tried or judged, and nearneſs of kin known, whereby no mixture of blood ſets them that are deſcended of a family at any degree of diſtance from one that derives his whole blood of that family? Yet this muſt be the juſt rule for trying the degrees, and knowing nearneſs of kin, in the room of which, to the great ſurpriſe of the preſbytery, ſome have ſubſtituted another unjuſt and fallacious one. Now that unjuſt and fallacious rule is the rule by which they that make uſe of it do find, that J. L J. L.'s daughter, is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother than ſhe or any that could deſcend from her is from her father; and that J. L. is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother's children, than ſhe is from her brother; and further, that J. L. is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother's grandchildren than ſhe is from his children; yea, and that J. L. is at the ſame very diſtance of kin from her brother's grandchildren, as her children, if ſhe had any, would be from brother's children: and, ſeeing ſhe communicates as little blood to her brother's grandchildren as her children do, there is neither more nor leſs blood, neither a greater nor leſſer degree of nearneſs of kin betwixt her and her brother's grandchildren, than there would be betwixt her children and her brother's children. And as the divine law ſays nothing from which any inference can be drawn, that God hath forbidden marriage upon one of theſe parallel degrees; ſo that law ſays as little to give any foundation for an inference, whereby marriage may be made unlawful upon the other. This rule, whatever the preſbytery think of it, was not brought to the divine law, but found in it, and no where elſe; and it applies to neither more nor leſs than what is plain and evident in that law; neither has any feaſible conſequence yet been drawn from that law to ſhew the leaſt miſtake in it. But the great evil of what is ſaid in the reaſons upon the nearneſs of kin, as ſtated in the divine law, is, that it makes J. B's marriage lawful, contrary to the will of the preſbytery, and the judgment of lawyers, to whom the preſbytery, while they profeſs themſelves to be teachers of, and at whoſe mouth we ſhould learn the law of God, do now ſend us to learn that law.

3. This rule laid down by the preſbytery is ſo far from being a juſt meaſure for trying the forbidden degrees, and from bringing us eaſily to the knowledge of nearneſs of kin as they pretend, that it perplexes and confounds the forbidden degrees, and utterly darkens the affair of nearneſs

of

of kin, as it is stated in God's word: for by this rule of theirs, if the marriage of a brother and sister, where the blood is not mixed upon any side, be not lawful, it is made more hainous than the marriage of grandfather with his grandchild, or any of his posterity, where the blood of the family is unmixed only upon one side; and yet the Lord declares, That their nakedness is his own, which he does not declare as to the brother and his sister, betwixt whom no such thing takes place. And further, by this one rule of trying the degrees, and knowing the nearness of kin, it is made the same thing for a granduncle to marry his brother's or sister's grandchildren as for a grandfather to marry his own grandchildren, or their posterity, and yet the law of God makes an express distinction, Lev. xviii. 10. 12. 13. 14. But by this rule there is no manner of distinction; for in both cases, a person that hath in him the unmixed blood of a family, does neither more or less but marry another that derives part of the blood from that family; and so the uncle and niece are nearer of kin than the brother and sister, because they are as near of kin as the grandfather and grandchild, or any that descend from him, which the Lord makes a greater nearness than that of brother and sister; and yet the uncle and niece are made near of kin in the word of God, only by virtue of the nearness of brother and sister, which is presupposed to it, ℣ 12. 13. 14. Is not this therefore a strange confusion of the degrees? And this is the presbytery's most just and easy rule. They also seem to confound affinity and consanguinity in such a manner, as to make J. B. who is J. M.'s granduncle by affinity, to be in the place of a parent to her by right of blood; and this is evidently beyond all law and common sense. And thus men that would be wise above what is written, are left to become vain in their imaginations.

The question is grosly mistated, when it is put upon this footing, whether the instances expresly mentioned in the 18th chapter of Leviticus do so exhaust the general prohibition, ℣ 6. that it may be lawful for any persons to marry together that are not expresly mentioned in the Levitical law.

J. B. never made a question of this; but it is constantly affirmed on his part, that the degrees of consanguinity and affinity, clearly pointed out in these instances, and in the reasons of the prohibitions, do so exhaust the general precept, ℣ 6. that marriage cannot be unlawful upon degrees not pointed out in the following verses; and that it is an usur-

pation upon the divine authority, to prohibit upon any degree upon which he has not prohibited.

To this agrees the Protestant definition of incest, and the decree of the council of Trent is pointed against this as the doctrine of Protestants; and this is according to the definition of incest in the law of Scotland, James VI. parl. 1. act 19. "Therefore our Sovereign Lord, with advice and consent "of my Lord Regent, and the three estates of this present "parliament, statutes and ordains, That whatsomever person "or persons, that commits the said abominable crime of in-"cest, that is to say, whatsomever person or persons they "be, that abuses their bodies with sik persons in degree as "God in his word has expresly forbidden, in any time co-"ming, as contained in the xviiith chapter of Leviticus, "shall be punished to the death."

And, act 15. "*Item*, Our Sovereign Lord, with advice "and consent of my Lord Regent, and three estates of this "present parliament, has statute and ordained, That the "halie band of marriage, made be all estates and sorts of "men and women, to be als lawful and als free as the law "of God has permitted the samen to be done without ex-"ception of person or persons; and has declared and de-"clares, That secunds in degrees of consanguinity and affi-"nity, and all degrees outwith the samen, contained in the "word of the eternal God, and that are not repugnant to "the said word of God, might and may lawfully marry at "all times, sen the 8th day of March, *&c.* and ratifies and "approves all the said marriages done, sen the said day, *&c.*"

And this was the thing stated in the ancient discipline of the evangelical churches in the valleys of Piemont, several hundreds of years before Luther. "Articles of marriage ought to "be performed according to the rules prescribed by God, "and not within those degrees which he hath forbidden; "and there need no scruple of conscience be made con-"cerning what the Pope has forbidden, although we give "him no money for a dispensation; for that which God "hath not forbidden, may very well be done without his "permission." *Morland's history, book* 1. *chap.* 5. *p.* 87. It is true, that Luther at first restricted incest to the instances expresly mentioned in the Levitical law, but afterward he went upon the degrees upon which these instances are given, as do the Protestant divines against the Papists. Brochmand, a Lutheran divine, thus states the Protestant argument against the Papists, *Princeps et palmarium argumentum est hoc; allatum*

tum a Luth. de Capt. Babyl. viz. Rectius noviſſe Deum quæ perſonæ ad conjugium aptæ ſint, et quouſque ſe extendant cognationis gradus, quam ullus homo. Deus vero non prohibuit conjugia niſi uſque ad ſecundum gradum in linea inæquali, Leviticus 18. *et* 20. *Quocirca conjugia in reliquis gradibus a Deo non probibitis inita, non poſſunt nec debent cenſeri conjugia inceſta. Brochmand de conjugia, quæſtio* 53.

They that have given their judgment in this caſe againſt J. B. have laboured under another remarkable miſtake in confounding the unequal or oblique line, as it is commonly called, with the direct line, and in overlooking this, *viz.* that the line is as direct from the common parent to his poſterity, by one of his children as by the other.

The Levitical law, though it ſpeaks nothing of theſe lines, makes a very clear diſtinction betwixt what we call the direct line, and the unequal or oblique, and that clearly founded in the nature of the thing. The Lord forbids the grandfather to marry the grand-daughter, or the grandſon to marry the grandmother, becauſe of their own nakedneſs, or becauſe there is a communication and derivation of blood betwixt them, and one of them is a part of the other's fleſh, and ſo makes it unlawful for all them to marry together, among whom this takes place, or where this may be ſaid, as where the Lord ſays it, "Theirs is thine own nakedneſs;" and this is perhaps inſinuated in the general prohibition, ℣ 6. if we look to the import of the original word: but this does not take place in the caſe of ſiſter and brother, betwixt whom there is no ſuch communication or derivation of blood, nor is there any ſuch communication of blood from the ſiſter to them that are deſcended of her brother; and therefore there can be no way of reckoning the nearneſs of kin in that caſe, but by the generations or degrees, while all that are on the direct line are unto one another as in the ſame degree, and ſo near of kin, that the nakedneſs of any one of them is the other's own nakedneſs, which is the higheſt degree of nearneſs of kin. This plain diſtinction is much overlooked, and a looſe way of arguing is gone upon, making an inference from the mother to the grandmother, as from the aunt to the grandaunt; though it be moſt evident the nature of the relation in the caſes of grandmother and grandaunt is vaſtly different, and the reaſon of the prohibition in God's law as to the grandmother, *viz.* "their own "nakedneſs," will never apply either to the aunt or grandaunt. Though the relation be the ſame, as to the matter of inceſt,

inceſt, in the caſe of the grandchild or greatgrandchild, yet it will never follow from this, that the relation is the ſame in the caſe of niece and grandniece: and though the grandfather, and the aſcendants on the direct line, be conſidered as one with the deſcendants on that line; yet this is only with reſpect to one another, and not with reſpect to any of them on another line, whoſe nakedneſs is not their own, otherwiſe it were moſt eaſy to demonſtrate every marriage inceſtuous: and therefore this reaſon for prohibiting a man to marry his aunt, "She is thy father's near kinſwoman," will never apply to the grandaunt, the grandfather's near kinſwoman, as has been with ſome confidence aſſerted, under the influence of the foreſaid miſtake.

The reaſonings upon the 14th verſe of the 18th chapter of Leviticus againſt J. B. look liker the forming of the word of God according to mens judgments, than the forming of their judgment, according to that word. The reaſon given in that 14th verſe, with reſpect to the uncle's wife, "ſhe is "thine aunt," does indeed ſhew, that the Lord carries the prohibition as far in affinity as he does in conſanguinity, but cannot extend to the grandaunt, whether we conſider the ſenſe and ſcope of the text, or the nature of the relation.

The text declares, as it is unlawful for a man to uncover the nakedneſs of his father's ſiſter, his father's near kinſwoman, or the nakedneſs of his mother's ſiſter, his mother's near kinſwoman; ſo it is unlawful for a man to uncover the nakedneſs of his father's or mother's brother, who is in the ſame nearneſs of kin with the father or mother's ſiſter; and then ſhews how a man in this caſe uncovers the nakedneſs of his father's brother, which is by approaching unto his wife, whoſe nakedneſs is thus declared to be her huſband's nakedneſs; and ſo ſays the Lord, "Thy father's brother's wife is thine aunt, "thy father's ſiſter." Thus it is plain, that as in the other caſes of this law, the Lord carries the affinity along with the conſanguinity, ſo he does in this caſe. And this is the only thing we have in the 14th verſe beyond what is contained in the 12th and 13th; ſo that if an inference cannot be drawn from the father's ſiſter to the grandfather's ſiſter, ℣ 12.; neither can an inference be from the father's brother's wife unto the grandfather's brother's wife: but from the father's ſiſter his near kinſwoman, unto the grandfather's ſiſter his near kinſwoman, there is not an inference, becauſe the grandnephew is at a farther diſtance of kin from the grandaunt than the nephew is from the aunt; and ſo the relation is not

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the same: for though the father's posterity be not set at a distance from him in this case by generations, seeing their nakedness is still his own, and thus they stand in the greatest nearness of kin to him, yet every generation sets them at a farther distance from his sister, whose nakedness theirs is not, otherwise the aunt's daughter, and daughter's daughter, *&c.* would be as near of kin to the nephew, and at no greater distance from him than is his aunt, whose nakedness theirs is. And it is certain, that they who descend from a common parent by the sister his daughter, are in a direct line from him and his daughter, as well as they that descend from him by the brother his son, are in a direct line from him, and from that son, and to thousands of generations, they stand every one of them with the common parent, and the brother or sister of whom they are descended, upon the direct line; so that none of them can be set at such a distance from the common parent, or from these by whom they are descended from him but that still their nakedness is their own: but these that descend from the common parent upon the one line, are set at a distance from them that descend from him upon the other line, and that by every generation; for even in the first the brother is at a greater distance from the sister than he is from his father. And now let it be determined by them that can tell whether two and three make five, let it be determined whether they that descend from a common parent upon one line be set at a greater distance of relation from them that descend from him upon another line, by two generations upon one line, or by one upon each line; and then the great question will be determined, whether the uncle and grandniece be nearer of kin to one another than are cousin-germans. Thus, neither by the aforesaid text, nor by the nature of the relation as stated in the law of God, can any inference be drawn against the lawfulness of marrying the grandaunt, from the unlawfulness of marrying the aunt: and more must be said upon the law of God for making out this inference than lawyers or divines have yet produced, before they can satisfy any impartial judge of the justness of it. It is owned, that the general statute upon the subject of incest is contained in ℣ 6. "None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to "him." And if this nearness of kin be not stated to us in the following verses by the Lord himself, what is the design of these following verses? And, if we be not to stand on the utmost uncertainty, must we not rest in the Popish law, where only we find a pretence of infallibility? But if we

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be to take this nearness of kin as the Lord himself has stated it, then let any lawyer or divine point out something in the law of God whereby it may be seen, that he hath stated this nearness of kin so as to take in the grandaunt with the aunt, and it will give satisfaction.

But the strength of the synod's cause against J. B. lies in the judgment of lawyers and divines, which is very confidently affirmed to be against the lawfulness of his marriage; and though this were universally true, as it is not, yet this their judgment must have the less weight, when it is considered, that it took its rise, not from the law of God, but from the law of the empire, as it stood in the sixth century, where they find those who are accounted to be in the place of parents forbidden to marry with them unto whom they are in the place of parents; and by this rule it is made unlawful for the uncle to marry the grandniece; but there is not the least appearance of this fancy in the law of God, or in the law of Scotland. And if they had not had any other rule of judgment in this case, but the law of God, which is the same thing with the Scottish law in this matter, it is much to be questioned, if this case would have been judged incestuous by any lawyer or divine. And J. B. cannot but think it hard, that Justinian's law, and the judgment of lawyers and divines influenced thereby, should now bind the men of this nation over to the highest censures of the church, and to death, when the law of God and of Scotland hath left them free. Lawyers have been desired to give some instances of statutes or decisions in Scotland, touching J. B.'s case; and instances have been given of foreign laws or decisions in countries where the punishment in this case is arbitrary; but there is no Scottish law nor decision yet produced that hits this case. And when it has been declared, that all incest whatsoever is capital by special statute in our law, it should have also been told, that all the incest whatsoever in our law is "the abusing of "the body with sik persons in degree as God in his law has "expressly forbidden," Lev. xviii. As to the instance of a man tried and condemned at Perth by the court of justiciary, for having carnal dealing with his wife's niece, it no wise touches this case, and it was exactly according to the law of God and of Scotland; for that man was guilty of abusing his body with such a person in degree as God in his word hath expressly forbidden, and so was clearly guilty of incest by the law of Scotland; but having carnal dealing with the wife's grandniece is not incest by that law, because she is not

not ſik a perſon in degree as God in his word hath expreſſly forbidden; and a deciſion making this to be inceſt by the law of Scotland, will be a new deciſion in Scotland. The caſe is very different where the puniſhment is arbitrary, and where it is capital; and lawyers will be leſs excuſeable in going beyond the law of God and of their country in the one caſe than in the other. But it is altogether unaccountable to take the help of the laws of other countries, where the puniſhment is arbitrary, to bring a perſon to death, where the law of God and of his country would ſuffer him to live.

Much ſtreſs is laid in the unanimity of lawyers and divines in their verdict upon this point. And when that is narrowly inquired into, the ground of boaſting upon this head will evaniſh. For are there not as eminent lawyers as have written, that have not carried inceſt further than the niece? And it is well known what Grotius ſays even as to the niece. And for the Civil law commentators that carry the prohibition down to the grandniece in conſanguinity, how many are there of them that carry it that length in affinity? Yea, have not ſome lawyers queſtioned the carrying down of the affinity to the very niece; ſo that take it either way, J. B.'s caſe is far from being unanimouſly judged inceſtuous by lawyers. And further, there is ſuch a queſtion among them, If laws forbidding marriages beyond God's prohibition can annul a marriage, when made, unleſs that certification be contained in the law?

As for the judgment of divines, it labours under the ſame defect in point of unanimity with that of the lawyers. In the writings of ſeveral foreign divines, we do not find the prohibition carried beyond the niece; and all they that, following the Civil laws, and the laws of their countries, have carried it down to the grandniece, have not ventured to carry it beyond the niece in affinity. As for Britiſh divines, perhaps there will not be found many among them, who, in their writings, have carried the prohibition beyond the niece.

[This cauſe was not decided by the aſſembly, but was annually called and poſtponed till the death of the defendant put an end to it.]

The end of the FIRST VOLUME.

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The eight Pages next preceding p. 481. are numbered too low by 2, occaſioned by a repetition of the numbers 471 & 472.

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The PREFACE.

OUR salvation, according to the scriptures, depends wholly on this revelation from heaven concerning Jesus the Saviour, "This is my beloved Son, in whom "I am well pleased;" even as man's life depended at first on the revelation concerning the tree by which his obe-

dience was tried. And as man was ſeduced from his obedience, and loſt his life, by hearkening to a falſe gloſs on that revelation; every one that is careful about his own ſalvation, ſhould be afraid of giving ear to any falſe interpretation of this revelation, by the faith of which we are ſaved. For as the firſt temptation began with a queſtion about what God had ſaid, and landed at laſt in a flat denial of the plain ſenſe of his words; in like manner there have been inquiries, and manifold diſputes about the ſenſe of the revelation concerning the Son of God, that have iſſued in denying the ſenſe that is moſt plain and obvious in the ſcripture-hiſtory of the oppoſition it met with, and of the credit it obtained among men, when it was firſt publiſhed. And it comes to the ſame thing, to deny the neceſſity of believing it, in that ſenſe, unto ſalvation. For whatever be the true ſenſe of this revelation, that ſenſe muſt, according to ſcripture, be neceſſary to ſalvation. That muſt be the great truth imported in Chriſt's reſurrection to all thoſe who believe it unto eternal life.

A late author, who denies that the revelation concerning Jeſus as the Son of God imported his being truly God to thoſe to whom it was firſt publiſhed, and to the firſt believers of it, pretends to clear the ſcriptures, that have been obſcured by human ſchemes, and to make wonderful diſcoveries of Chriſt's glory, by means of his notion of the pre-exiſtence of his human ſoul; which he would prove from the ſcriptures to the good people, by the help of ſome remarkable ſayings of famous preachers, paſſing current among them, and applied to his purpoſe. Yet that notion never came originally from the ſcriptures, but owes its firſt riſe to the vain imaginations of the philoſophers. At leaſt we may ſay, it could not be ſo eaſily learned from the ſcripture, as that which was in queſtion betwixt Jeſus and the Jews, when he told them the truth that he heard from the Father, and they oppoſed it. No man ever learned from the hiſtory of the goſpel, that the Jews perſecuted Jeſus for maintaining the pre-exiſtence of his ſoul; or that this was the faith of his diſciples, from whom he received worſhip as the Son of God.

But, in order to reap all the great advantages he propoſes to us by admitting his notion, we muſt firſt forget ſome things that we thought the ſcriptures taught us, and muſt go along with him upon quite other ſuppoſitions, if we would ſee any thing like a foundation for his notion.

As,

As, 1. We have learned from the ſcriptures, that there is a foundation in the ſame one divine nature or Godhead for ſuch a diſtinction as is between the ſender and the ſent among men, which is commonly called *perſonal*. The Father ſends forth his Son, made of a woman; the Son ſends the Holy Ghoſt from the Father; and both are ſent to do the divine works, or to work the works that are proper to the only true God.

But in place of this diſtinction of divine perſons in the ſame divine nature, if we follow this author in his reaſoning, though he pretends to believe the Trinity, we muſt only think of the divine nature, (which is the ſame in all the perſons), and conſider that ſame divine nature as it is incapable to be ſent, or to act in ſubordination. And ſo, in thinking of the Son and Holy Ghoſt as condeſcending to be ſent, we cannot, in his view, look on any of them as divine; becauſe it is repugnant to the one divine nature to be ſent.

2. We have alſo learned from the ſcriptures, that however the Father be manifeſted in the man Jeſus, and however the Holy Ghoſt dwell in him; yet that man is not, and cannot be called the Father, nor the Holy Ghoſt, but is called, and is the Son of God.

But, if we would follow the train of this author's reaſoning, we muſt forget this, and learn to think of the divine nature, as making one complex perſon with that man, by being peculiarly manifeſted and dwelling eminently in him; and then we may as well call him the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, as the Son: yea, we ſhall then conſider the Son as a human perſon united with the divine nature as another ſingle perſon, making one complex with him.

3. And we have further learned from the ſcriptures, that Jeſus, thus diſtinguiſhed from the Father manifeſted peculiarly in him, and from the Holy Ghoſt eminently inhabiting him, is at the ſame time diſtinguiſhed from all other men, by being not a human, but a divine perſon, even the Son of God; who appears in the goſpel as verily God, as the Son of man is man; and that this is the great glory of Chriſt, that he is a divine perſon. This makes his blood the valuable and full atonement for ſin; and this makes him the object of our worſhip.

But, if we attend to this author, in place of that divine perſon, we muſt think of a human ſoul exiſting before the body, before the firſt man, and before the world. We

muſt think of this human ſoul as the moſt glorious ſpirit, derived from God in an eminent manner before the creation of angels, and as far excelling them naturally, as Jeſus is now miraculouſly exalted above them in his glorified ſtate. And we may even conſider whether this mighty ſpirit, in whom the divine nature is manifeſted and dwells, might not (if it durſt be ſaid) perhaps have been employed in making this world; but this may be ſaid, that the glory and dignity of this great human ſoul made the humiliation and ſufferings to which he condeſcended ſo very far below himſelf in the body, a moſt valuable ſatisfaction for the ſins of men, and a ſufficient atonement for them. And in this peculiarly created, and very glorious perſon, in whom the divine nature is manifeſted and dwells eminently, even in this ſame ſpirit, animating the body of Jeſus as its proper ſoul, we muſt behold the glory of Chriſt. This human ſoul muſt be the perſon that appeared of old to the fathers as the angel of the Lord, and as a man, and was worſhipped by them. And this muſt be the true Son of God, whom God his Father ſent forth in the fulneſs of time, according to a covenant before made with him, of which we have heard much in ſermons: for the one Godhead could not covenant with itſelf. So that this human ſoul is the Son of God who came forth from the Father, and came into the world; and, having finiſhed the work given him to do, is now glorified with the Father, with the glory he had with him before the world was.

There muſt be a very great alteration on the Engliſh congregational churches, from what they once were, if any of them can bear with this changer of the glory of their God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, as one of their teachers, and a chief man among them. They muſt be far gone in the way of the falſely named catholic charity, that is now faſhionable in the world, if they can bear with an old Sabellian, now putting upon them the groſſeſt Arianiſm for the true ſcripture-doctrine of Chriſt's perſon. For what Arian was he that ever denied the union of the Deity with his Logos, by manifeſtation and inhabitation? And what more divinity does this author allow to his preexiſtent human ſoul? This ſame writer has been long practiſing at courting the regard of the philoſophers and the polite world, by ſmoothing the goſpel to them, and ſweetening it to their taſte. And now, at laſt, he has fairly given up the perſon of Chriſt to them, having the confi-

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dence at the same time to preach to the churches another Christ, the product of his most sincere and humble inquiries, and fervent prayers. But will they hear him? Will they fall down and worship his idol? Or shall it be thought, that they have been saying to this Reverend doctor, Up, make us a Christ to go before us; for, as for the Christ preached by the apostles, we have lost sight of him in a cloud of disputes that have been raised among great and learned men about his person?

If the Christ described in the following notes be not the same that was preached by the apostles, as before by the prophets, it will be vain to talk of humble inquiries and prayers. But the question must be referred to them who are taught of God by the scriptures to believe in the name of his Son. For, if what is said shall be agreeable to the generality of the Christian world, there will be reason to suspect it of falsehood. It is not every zealously orthodox man that has the scripture-notion of the Trinity, and person of Christ.

The NOTES.

THE SON OF GOD.

LUKE i. 35.

——*That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called* THE SON OF GOD.

SECT. I.

That born of Mary truly man.

THAT which Mary conceived in her womb, and brought forth, was a living human body, animated by a human soul, that grew in wisdom as the body grew in stature, and was separated from it by death: chap. ii. 40. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in "spirit." Vers. 52. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and "stature." John xii. 27. "Now is my soul troubled." Matth. xxvi. 38. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even un- "to death." Luke xxiii. 46. "Father, into thy hands I "commend

" commend my ſpirit." John xix. 30. " And he bowed his " head, and gave up the ghoſt." Acts ii. 26. 27. " My fleſh " ſhall reſt in hope. For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in " hades."

However fleſh and ſpirit be diſtinguiſhed, yet, when that thing born of the Virgin is called " fleſh," or " fleſh and " blood," theſe expreſſions do not exclude the animating ſoul; but, according to ſcripture-ſtyle, include it. See for " fleſh," Gen. vi. 13. " The end of all fleſh is come before " me." Chap. vii. 21. 22. " And all fleſh died that moved " upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beaſt, " and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, " and every man. All in whoſe noſtrils the breath of the " ſpirit of life, of all in the dry land, died." If. xl. 6. 7. 8. with 1 Pet. i. 24. " For all fleſh is as graſs, and all the " glory of man as the flower of graſs. The graſs withereth." And for " fleſh and blood," ſee Heb. ii. 14. 15. " Foraſ- " much then as the children are partakers of fleſh and " blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame; " that through death he might deſtroy him that had the " power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who " through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to " bondage." The fleſh and blood whereof the children are partakers, is living and mortal. The ſame is his fleſh and blood: 1 Cor. xv. 50. 51. 53. " Fleſh and blood cannot " inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption in- " herit incorruption. — We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall " all be changed.— For this corruptible muſt put on incor- " ruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality."

And the " body of Jeſus Chriſt," (Heb. x. 5. 7. 10.), the " body prepared him" when he ſaid, " Lo, I come to do thy " will, by the which will we are ſanctified through the offering " of that body," muſt be a living body, fit to die as a ſacri- fice. For when he bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, (1 Pet. ii. 24.), his ſoul was made the offering for ſin, If. liii. 10. We cannot ſay, that the apoſtle excludes the animating ſpirit when he ſays, Rom. xii. 1. — " That " ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice."

Some philoſophers imagined the pre-exiſtence of human ſouls to their bodies, wherein they looked on them as con- fined, thinking of their union with the body as a debaſement to them. But no ſuch thing can be learned from the ſcripture; which repreſents the ſoul of man as made to ani- mate the body, and live in it: Gen. ii. 7. " And the Lord " God

" God formed man duſt from the ground, and breathed in-
" to his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living
" ſoul." From this we learn the pre-exiſtence of the body to the ſoul, which was originally made for living in the body. And from 2 Cor. chap. 5. we learn, that when the ſoul is diveſted of its own body by death, it muſt be clothed with another manſion, wherein it may live as in the body, till it be again united with its own body, to live for ever in it, at the reſurrection. And this is the conſolation the goſpel gives us againſt death. The hope that it ſets before us, is the hope of living happily in the body. So far is the ſcripture from leading us to think, that it would be an enlargement agreeable to the nature and make of the human ſoul, to be diſengaged from all connection with body and matter, as the philoſophers dreamed: for when the ſcripture ſets forth the man Chriſt Jeſus in his exalted ſtate, as glorified beyond all creatures, it repreſents him as glorified in the body wherein he was humbled; even as his people hope that he will " change the body of their humiliation, that it may be " made conformable to the body of his glory," Phil. iii. 21.

The ſpirit that animated the body born of the Virgin, is alſo diſtinguiſhed, as a human ſoul, from the ſpirits of the beaſts, by its being capable to know the will of God to be done in the body, and capable of miſery by a ſenſe of the divine diſpleaſure, and of happineſs by the ſenſe of his favour. For a body was prepared Jeſus Chriſt to do the will of the Father, whoſe " law" was " within his heart:" and when, according to his will, that body was offered for ſin, his ſoul was " exceeding ſorrowful unto death," by the hiding of his Father's face; and, being raiſed from the dead, he is made " exceeding glad with his countenance."

Thus Jeſus Chriſt, being made of the ſeed of the Virgin, who was of the ſeed of David, and of the ſeed of Abraham, is truly man, according to the promiſes, " the ſon " of David, the ſon of Abraham, and the ſeed of the wo-
" man;" as verily man, as his brethren of mankind, who are from him denominated the " ſeed of the woman," even the " children" with whom he " took part of the ſame " fleſh and blood." That born of Mary is a true human body, animated with a truly human ſoul, or a ſpirit of the human, and not of the angelic or any other kind. For to ſay, that the ſpirit of his body is of any other kind than that which God inſpired into Adam's body, is indeed to ſay that he is not a man. He muſt be man, in diſtinction from the

the brute creation, on the one hand, and, on the other, in distinction from the superior angelical order of spirits, of the nature of angels; and much more from any spirit that can be supposed far excelling angels, and created in a peculiar way before all other creatures.

The Son of man.

When Jesus is styled the "Son of man," whatever we may find to be imported in this designation with respect to his office, yet certainly it must first of all import this, That he is truly man, and not the first man. And while we acknowledge him, by this title, as man descended from man, we may be very sure, it cannot signify, that he was begot by a man, because he was not so begot: for though he be of the seed of David, and the seed of Abraham; yet, being made of the woman that never knew man, he cannot be called the Son of man because any man begat him.

It cannot be shewn, that Dan. vii. 13. is at any time supposed to be in view where the title "Son of man" is given to Christ in the New Testament; because, in that text, the "Ancient of days" sitting in judgment, can be no other than Christ himself appearing in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels. This is manifest, by comparing the description of him as the Ancient of days, "the "hair of his head like the pure wool," Dan. vii. 9. with Rev. i. 14. and by this, that the "likeness of the Son of "man" which they bring near before him, cannot be he himself, but his church gathered to him from the four winds, by his angels; because the explication of the vision makes this likeness of the Son of man, to whom the kingdom is given, to be "the people of the saints." See verf. 18. 22. 27.

When this title is given to Christ in the New Testament, it may refer to the styling of any of the prophets who prefigured him, "son of man." Or it may point at that passage in the 80th Psalm to which Jesus refers when speaking of himself as the vine, and his Father as the husbandman, John chap. xv.; for in that psalm he is thus spoke of, verf. 14. 15. 17. — "Visit this vine, and the "vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the "branch that thou madest strong for thyself. — Let thy "hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son "of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself." But

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the text of the Old Teſtament that is eſpecially ſuppoſed to be in view where the title "Son of man" is given to Chriſt in the New Teſtament, is the 8th pſalm, where (verſ. 4) he is diſtinguiſhed, by that deſignation "the "Son of man," as the ſecond Adam, from the firſt man, who prefigured him, as the Lord of the new creation, in his being Lord of the firſt. For the apoſtle explains that pſalm, and applies it to Jeſus in this manner, Heb. ii. 5.—9. "But now we ſee not yet all things put under him. But "we ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the angels, "for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and ho- "nour."

Now, whatever glory and honour this "Son of man" be crowned with above angels, in conſequence of his death; yet it is evident from this whole paſſage, that he is man, a creature naturally inferior to them, and not a creature derived in an eminent manner from God, before the creation of the firſt man, and before the creation of angels, and naturally excelling them: for ſo he would not be a human creature; he would not be the Son of man.

Some, pretending to ſet forth the excellency of Chriſt's body, have denied it to be of the ſubſtance of the Virgin, and ſo to be of the ſeed of David and of Abraham. And others, pretending to ſhew the excellency of his ſoul, have made it a glorious ſpirit, naturally excelling angels, exiſting before them, and before the firſt man, and before the body; and ſo in effect deny him to be truly man, as the title "Son of man" imports: for whatever elſe can be ſuppoſed imported in it, this muſt ſtill be the firſt thing, that he is verily man.

SECT. II.

That born of her is holy, as the true firſt-born.

THat which was born of Mary was a firſt-born ſon, and holy to the Lord, as the true firſt-born, chap. ii. 22. 23. "They brought him to Jeruſalem, to preſent him to "the Lord; as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every "male that openeth the womb, ſhall be called holy to the "Lord." This is the true firſt-born, prefigured by all the firſt-born of Iſrael, and holy to the Lord in a peculiar and moſt eminent manner, as ſeparated to him, to be that ſacrifice for ſin wherewith he is pleaſed, and whereby ſinners

of mankind may come before him, Micah vi. 6. 7. and find eternal acceptance with him. This is the great purpose for which this holy thing was born of the Virgin, as we see from Heb. x. 5.—10. And for this most holy use it was sanctified and made fit, 1. In being pure from sin; 2. In being separated to God as the flesh and blood of his Son.

1. This that was born of Mary was far otherwise holy than any first-born, as being altogether free from the guilt of Adam's sin, and no way tainted with any thing of the corruption of human nature that descends from him to his posterity by generation. For Mary's first-born son came not into the world in that way, or by virtue of God's word to our first parents, "Be fruitful and multiply," but by virtue of his word after the fall, concerning "the seed of "the woman." And, in place of being begot by a man, and so deriving from Adam guilt and corruption of sin, the Holy Ghost came upon the Virgin, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her: therefore that child was born of her, and therefore that child was holy, and pure from sin.

2. But further, through the Holy Ghost's coming upon the Virgin, that which she conceived was prepared or fitted to the Son of God as his flesh and blood; his body, by the offering of which all his people are sanctified. That which she conceived and brought forth, was sanctified or separated to God as the soul and body of his Son, his own soul and his own body. By this it was brought nearer to God than any thing that ever was or can be separated to him; and so it is holy in the highest and most eminent degree: for no sanctified person or thing can be so appropriated to God, as the flesh and blood of the Son of God. This gives the Virgin's first-born son the true "excellency of dignity:" For this is the Father's beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. Thus the man Christ Jesus is "the holy one of "God." And, by the relation betwixt this flesh and blood and those who are called the "seed of the woman," that whole seed, in distinction from the "seed of the serpent," is sanctified and made holy to the Lord, as his children, the brethren of his Son.

SECT. III.

The name Son of God *points out and distinguishes the person.*

WHen it is said, "That holy thing — shall be called "the Son of God," this name points out the person, in

in distinction from other persons, as in answer to the question, Who he is? Jesus asked his disciples, (Matth. xvi. 13. 15. 16.), "Whom do men say, that I, the Son of man, "am?" And when it appeared from the answer, that other men knew not who he was, he asked them again, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Peter gave the answer, that shews he knew him, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the "living God." This describes him by his office, "the "Christ," and distinguishes him as a person, by calling him "the Son of the living God." And we may see from this passage, that men knowing him to be "the Son of "man," might yet be ignorant of the person, or not know who he is, as not knowing him to be "the Son of "God." Thus John Baptist said of him to the Jews, "There "standeth one among you whom ye know not." Yea, though he was his relation, he acknowledged, that he himself did not know him till he understood that he was the Son of God, John i. 26. 33. 34. And the multitude that followed Jesus over the sea (John chap. 6.), would have taken him for their king, the Messiah, (verse. 15.), and looked on him as the great prophet, like Moses, and so sought direction from him how they might work the works of God for eternal life, (verse. 14. & 28.); yet they were ignorant of the person; they knew not who he was; they understood him not when he said he came down from heaven. They said, (verse. 42.), "It not this Jesus the son of Joseph, "whose father and mother we know? how is it then that "he saith, I came down from heaven?" For they knew him not as the disciples, who believed him (verse. 69.) to be "the Son of the living God."

This distinguishes that which was born of the Virgin, from all others, as a person, that it is called "the Son of "God." For however any men or angels may be spoke of as sons of God, yet the apostle says, (Heb. i. 4. 5. 6.), "he is made so much better than the angels, as he hath "inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto "which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my "Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will "be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And "again, when he bringeth in the first-born into the "world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship "him." And so, by the name "Son of God," Jesus is distinguished, like Isaac from all Abraham's children, as

" the only begotten Son," and " the only begotten of the " Father," John i. 14. 18. Gen xxii. 2. 12. Heb. xi. 17.

By this alſo he ſtands diſtinguiſhed from the Father, manifeſted peculiarly in him, and from the Holy Ghoſt, who dwells eminently in him: For that holy thing which was born of Mary is not called " the Father," nor " the Holy " Ghoſt," however it be united with them, by the fulleſt manifeſtation and inhabitation; but it is called " the Son " of God."

The diſtinction of a ſon from his father is that which we call perſonal, and anſwers to the queſtion, Who ſuch an one is? among men whom we cannot diſtinguiſh by any property of the common human nature, as we diſtinguiſh them from any other kind of beings. But we diſtinguiſh men from one another by their different relations; as that of Father and Son. And this ſort of diſtinction is commonly called perſonal. God is not diſtinguiſhed in this manner from all other beings; becauſe the divine nature diſtinguiſhes itſelf ſufficiently from them, without any occaſion for the perſonal diſtinction: and ſo we do not think of the Deity as a perſon, in differencing God from the creatures. But if we think of a perſon in the Godhead, this neceſſarily ſuppoſes another divine perſon, who cannot be diſtinguiſhed from him by any property whereby God is differenced from all that is not God, but who is diſtinguiſhed from him to us by ſome ſuch relation wherein they appear ſo to us, as we may be ſure the one is not the other: Even as we know, among men, the *ſent* is not his *ſender*, and the *father* is not his *own ſon*, nor the *ſon* his *own father*, however near we ſuppoſe the union betwixt them.

When we ſhall ſee, from the hiſtory of the goſpel, that the calling Jeſus " Son of God" makes him God, even as ſtyling him " Son of man" makes him man, and when we ſee him at the ſame time diſtinguiſhed from the Father as his Son; we cannot then think of him as differing from the Father by any divine property whereby he ſtands diſtinguiſhed from the creatures as God. But we find them diſtinguiſhed to us in the ſame manner as we diſtinguiſh perſons among men. We know how a human father and his ſon appear to be different perſons, while we cannot diſtinguiſh them by any property of the human nature. The notion we have of human nature and all its properties in the one, cannot diſtinguiſh him to us from the other; and yet we clearly perceive them to be two really different perſons:

ſons: but of that reality, from which this manifeſt difference ariſes, we have no knowledge.

This unknown, whatever it be, that makes one man himſelf, and not another human perſon, was in the man Jeſus ſupplied by "the Son of God." And ſo the work of the Holy Ghoſt coming on the Virgin was, not only to make her conceive this child without a man, and pure from ſin, but alſo to prevent its being a human perſon, that it might be the ſoul and body of the Son of God. And, being thus fitted to him, it became his own, by his ſaying, "Lo, I come to do thy will;" even as the "light ſhined" at firſt "out of darkneſs," by his ſaying, "Let it be." As when the temple was built, and prepared for God, he took poſſeſſion of it as his own houſe, while the cloud overſhadowed it; even ſo, while the "power of the Higheſt "overſhadowed" the conceiving virgin, the "Son of the "Higheſt" took hold of that which was conceived, by calling it his own, and it was ſo. "A body haſt thou prepa-"red me. Then ſaid I, Lo, I come to do thy will. By "the which will we are ſanctified, through the offering of "the body of Jeſus Chriſt." And, "Foraſmuch as the "children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf "likewiſe took part of the ſame." Thus, that holy thing born of the Virgin, being truly man, is diſtinguiſhed from all other men by its ſeparation to the Son of God as his own ſoul and his own body; ſeeing it is thereby not a human, but a divine perſon. So, "that holy thing born" of Mary is "called the Son of God." And this is the conſequence of the Holy Ghoſt's coming upon her, and the power of the Higheſt overſhadowing her; as the angel ſaid to Mary, inquiring, how it ſhould be, That ſhe, not knowing a man, would conceive in her womb, and bring forth a Son who ſhould be great, and be called the Son of the Higheſt? "The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and "the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee: there-"fore alſo that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, "ſhall be called the Son of God." When we ſpeak of the miraculous conception pointed out here, we muſt ſay, there is a threefold miracle wrought in this conception by the power of the Higheſt. 1. She who knew not a man, conceived, and brought forth a ſon. 2. That which ſhe conceived, was ſeparate from ſin. 3. And that holy thing which ſhe conceived and brought forth, was no other perſon but the Son of God. If we mean all this when we talk

talk of Christ's miraculous conception, then we may safely say, he is called the Son of God because of his miraculous conception. But if the miraculous conception be understood to mean no more but the first of these exclusive of the other, then nothing can be said more false, and more opposite to the text; which plainly tells, that not only shall this be the effect of the Holy Ghost's coming upon the Virgin, that she shall conceive without a man, but this also shall be the effect of it, that the holy thing born of her shall be called the Son of God.

While the man Jesus is distinguished from all other men as a divine person, by being called the Son of God; he is at the same time distinguished from the Father as another person, by being called his Son. And when we shall think of this *sonship*, and consider all that the scripture directs us to conceive as imported in it, we shall see, that it all supposes him to be God, and not another God than the Father, who is "the only true God:" And yet, because it plainly distinguishes him to us from the Father as another person, there must be some foundation in the same Godhead for this distinction. But, as that cannot be any property of the divine nature, whereby the only true God is differenced from all that is not God, we must say the same thing of it that we say of that which lies at the bottom of the distinction of human persons, who cannot be distinguished by any property of humanity, but yet are really different, though we cannot tell how they come to be so, while yet we know very well how they appear to be different.

SECT. IV.

His name Son of God *imports his being truly God.*

THough Christ's being called "the Son of God," and thereby distinguished to us from the Father, should not import a generation in the divine nature: though it should no more import, that the Father begat him by any such divine generation, than his being called "the Son of man" imports, that a man begat him, and so was his father: yet his being called "the Son of God" must as well import, that he is truly God, as his being called "the Son of man" imports that he is truly man. And this must always be supposed as the first thing in all that the scripture directs

directs us to conceive as the import of his name "the Son "of God," even as all that is imported in the name "Son of man" supposes his being man. It must be so for this plain reason, That, before either they who at first believed Jesus to be "the Son of God," or they who at first denied him to be "the Son of God," could perceive all that the scripture directs us to think of his *sonship*, both of them took his calling himself "the Son of God," to be "making "himself God." And it will appear evidently, from the history of it in the gospel, that, when this was first published, called in question and disputed, all parties concerned understood this to be the sense of it; and, however they differed, agreed all in this.

The man Christ Jesus, the pattern of faith to all his true followers, who "have the same Spirit of faith," learned from his infancy this revelation concerning himself by the angel to his mother. For we see him, at twelve years of age, putting her in mind of it on occasion of her saying, "Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing;" saying upon this, "Wist ye not that I must be about "my Father's business?" Luke ii. 42. 48. 49. And he was confirmed in the belief of this revelation at his baptism, before he entered on his public ministry, when the Holy Ghost descended on him, and he heard this truth from the Father, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well "pleased," Luke iii. 22.

The gospel, or glad tidings of the accomplishment of Old-testament prophecy concerning the Messiah in Jesus, began at the baptism of John, who "saw, and bare re-"cord, that this is the Son of God." The passage in Isaiah to which he referred, as foretelling his own coming "to "manifest him to Israel," plainly calls him "the Lord "our God." And John foretold his "baptizing with the "Holy Ghost, and with fire," (which he did on the day of Pentecost), as the full proof of what he saw and testified at his baptism. So that he testified that Jesus is the Son of God in that same sense wherein he was fully proved to be so when the proof was finished by his baptizing with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, on the day of Pentecost. John Baptist said, he was not worthy to loose his shoes, who, coming after him, is preferred before him, because he was before him; who cometh from heaven, and so is above all. He pointed out the connection of this man Jesus with the Father who sent him, and with the Holy Ghost

Ghoſt given him without meaſure, and diſtinguiſhed him from all others, as the ſpeaker of the words of God, or the words proper to God, who ſays and it is done, commands and it ſtands faſt.

When Jeſus had heard this truth from the Father at his baptiſm, and was confirmed in the faith of it by the Holy Ghoſt's deſcending and abiding on him; he was then tempted by Satan to doubt of it, and put it again to the proof, in this manner, "If thou be the Son of God, command "that theſe ſtones be made bread." And this plainly ſuppoſes Jeſus believing himſelf to be the Son of God, ſo as to be truly God; becauſe the proof that is ſought of his being the Son of God, is his ſpeaking as none but God can do, commanding ſtones to be made bread.

In his public miniſtry, the great ſcope of his doctrine, referring to the Old Teſtament, and of his miracles, was this truth that he heard from the Father at his baptiſm; as we may ſee eſpecially from the goſpel of John, where moſt of his diſcourſes concerning himſelf are recorded. And we may take a few inſtances from that goſpel to ſhew, that when he ſaid he was the Son of God, he required men to believe him to be truly God; that his diſciples believed this; and that the Jews, who condemned him for calling himſelf the Son of God, underſtood that this was his own ſenſe of this name.

John chap. v. he ſays to the Jews, accuſing him of breaking the day of God's reſt from his works, by calling an impotent man on that day to take up his bed and walk, "My "Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Upon this they accuſe him of ſaying, "That God was his Father, making "himſelf equal with God," and ſeek the more to kill him. In his anſwer to this accuſation, he acknowledges his ſubjection and ſubſerviency to the Father in his office and humanity. But he inſiſts upon his working with his Father, as he ſaid, in every work proper to God, as the reſurrection and the judgment; and ſo ſharing with him in the honour or worſhip due to God, as manifeſted and diſtinguiſhed to men by theſe divine works. And he deſcribes his own proper manner of working theſe divine works, when ſpeaking of the work of raiſing men from treſpaſſes and ſins to life eternal, and of raiſing the dead from their graves. He ſays, and it is done. "The voice of the Son of God" raiſes the dead, even as

it

it made the light to shine out of darkness, when he was working with the Father in these works from which he rested on the seventh day. In proof of his being the Son of God in this sense, he brings the testimony of John Baptist, and of the works his Father gave him to finish, and the Father's testimony, whose word they had not abiding in them, because they believed not in him, as he said. And he directs them to search the scriptures, as testifying this of him, and plainly turns eternal life upon the belief of it.

John chap. 9. the man that was born blind, upon whom Jesus wrought the divine work of making him see, suffered ejection from the synagogue for the regard he professed to him, as one who could not have made him see if he were not of God, and as one with whom God was more notably present, than with any man since the world began. After this, Jesus finds this man, and says to him, "Dost thou "believe on the Son of God?" And, upon his making himself known to him as the Son of God, and his believing him to be so, he worships him, and Jesus receives the worship from him in that same character.

John chap. 10. Jesus says, (verse. 30.), "I and the Father "are one." And after he is accused of blasphemy for saying this, as thereby making himself God, being a man, he says, (verse. 36.), "Say ye, — Thou blasphemest; because "I said, I am the Son of God?" He insists upon his being believed in this, by his doing the works of his Father, and so calls them to believe the same thing in these words, (verse. 38.), "That the Father is in me, and I in him." And by this the Jews still understand him to be making himself God, as before; and therefore seek again to take him. Here we may observe, that he makes his saying, "The Father is in me, and I in him," the same with his saying, "I am the Son of God;" and this again the same with his saying, "I and the Father are one;" and that he lays the proof of this that he says upon his doing the works proper to God. And in the 82d psalm, to which he refers in answer to their charge of blasphemy, we see (verse. 6.) those who are called "sons of the Highest," by the word of God that came to them, are by that same word called "gods;" so that in that passage "Son of the Highest" is the same with "God." Jesus takes notice, that they are "called gods;" and he says, "The scripture cannot be "broken," *i. e.* it must be verified. But verified it could

not be in them, who died like men, and fell thereby, as any other princes, from that eminent ſtation wherein they were " called gods." It is not every prince or potentate among men that is called " god" in this pſalm. Thoſe " called gods" are plainly the princes of Iſrael, that judged in God's land, who ſtood and judged among them in that theocracy. And they are manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from other princes on the ſame very account on which they are called gods. For in their office, as rulers and judges of Iſrael, they prefigured him who was to rule the houſe of Jacob for ever; and they ſtood in that office as his types, even as the prieſts prefigured him in his prieſthood. Therefore they are called gods. And the ſcripture calling them ſo, is not broken; becauſe what is ſaid of theſe types, holds fully true in their antitype; who is plainly enough pointed at in that ſame pſalm, (verſ. 8.), " Ariſe, O God, judge " the earth: for thou ſhalt inherit all nations. They die " like men, and fall like one of the princes;" but he ariſes from the dead, to judge and to inherit the church of all nations. His reſurrection manifeſts him to be truly God, the ſame God that ſtood in the congregation of theſe mighty, and judged among them to whom the word of God ſaid, " Ye are gods, and ſons of the Higheſt." And this ſaying holds true in that man, even that holy thing conceived by the Virgin, which the Father " ſanctified" or ſeparated to be the ſoul and body of his Son, when he " ſent him into the world." For ſo that man is truly the Son of the Higheſt, and truly God: and ſo the ſcripture, calling them gods who prefigured him in his office among men, is " not broken;" nor is he blaſpheming, in " ma- " king himſelf God, being a man."

From theſe inſtances we may ſee how Jeſus would have men to underſtand him when he called himſelf " the Son " of God." And we may alſo ſee, from the inſtance of the man he cured of blindneſs, believing on him as the Son of God, and ſo worſhipping him, that they who believed him to be the " Son of God," as he would have them, looked on him as truly God: for as Jeſus maintained, againſt the devil, the worſhip of God only; ſo there was not any point of religion held with more zeal among all the Jews at that time than this, That none but God is to be worſhipped. And from theſe inſtances it is likewiſe evident, that the unbelieving Jews underſtood him to be ſaying, that God was his Father, in a way that was " ma-

" king

" king himself equal with God;" and that he, " being a " man, made himself God;" which they called blasphemy; and for which they sought to kill him as a blasphemer.

It is very observable, they never at any time charged him with the crime of making another God; nor did they ever accuse any of his followers, that called on his name, of worshipping another God. But, in place of that, they were obliged to have recourse to the law against blasphemy. And those who did not reckon him a madman, (John x. 20. 21.), would have him to be a blasphemer; for that he, being a man, made himself one and the same God with the Father, pretending to shew himself a divine person, equal with the Father, as having the same divine nature, by the works proper to the only true God, in distinction from the creatures and all idols. In this same sense they at last put the question to him, " Art thou the " Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And when he owned it was so as they said, they shewed their zeal for God, against this horrible reproach upon his name, in condemning him to death for " the blasphemy." The Jews could call themselves the sons of God, without any suspicion of blasphemy, " We have one Father, even God." And the high priest and rulers of the Jews might be called " gods," according to their law, Exod. xxii. 28. But, by their law against blasphemy, they alledged he ought to die, " be- " cause he made himself the Son of God," John xix. 7. 8. 9. And Pilate, hearing that saying, " was the more " afraid, went again into the judgment-hall, and said to " Jesus, Whence art thou?" For the Heathen also seem to have had some dark corrupted notion of the incarnation among them; of which we have an instance in the New Testament, Acts xiv. 11. 12.

When Jesus was crucified, the Jews imitated their father the devil, tempting him upon the faith of his being the Son of God. They said to him on the cross, " If thou be " the Son of God, come down from the cross." And they triumphed in his death, as a demonstration of the falsehood and blasphemy of what he professed and taught, and his disciples believed: " Let him deliver him now, if he will " have him; for he said, I am the Son of God."

The faith of his disciples was then staggered, through their remaining under that prejudice of a secular Messiah, thinking it was proper for the Son of God, coming into the

world, to appear in worldly grandeur at the head of the Jewish nation, until the resurrection, delivering him from the death to which the Jews condemned him, determined the point in question on the side of their faith. For thereby the Father demonstrated the truth that Jesus had heard of him, and "declared him with power to be his Son," even as he confessed to the Jews when they condemned him. He reversed their sentence in the resurrection: "He delivered him," for "he would have him; "because he said, I am the Son of God." And therefore, when the most doubtful of his disciples was convinced of his resurrection, and his faith, that had been shaken by his death, was thereby restored to vigorous action, he confessed it in these words to him, "My Lord, and my God;" even as the women, when they first beheld him alive, "held him by the feet, and worshipped him."

The question is not, What senses we may now devise as imported in that name given to Jesus, "the Son of God?" but, What it imported, in the view of all parties concerned, when it was first published, according to the plain history of the gospel? Now, there we see, on the one hand, Jesus himself, with John Baptist and the disciples; and, on the other hand, the devil, and the Jews, with their rulers, engaged in solemn controversy about it, that issued in the death of Jesus: and we see the Father, appealed to on both sides, interposing by the resurrection. And, on all hands, the designation "Son of God," as applied to Jesus, bears this sense, That he is as truly God as the son of man is man. For his saying, "I am the Son of God," in any other sense, could not be called blasphemy by the Jews; nor could it have drawn worship to him from any believer of it among them at that time. In any other view of it, he would have fairly denied the charge of "making himself God," and so cleared himself of blasphemy, and would not have received worship as the Son of God; or else, we may be very sure, he had not been raised from the dead.

SECT. V.

The scripture-account of Christ's sonship.

CHrist's name, "the Son of God," then, plainly imports his Godhead, the same with the Father's: but, at the same time, it as plainly distinguishes him to us from the

the Father, as another divine perſon. And, when we ſearch the ſcriptures for the import of this "ſonſhip," it is not to be expected, that we, who are not capable of knowing what it is that conſtitutes different perſons among the creatures, are to be taught by the ſcriptures what lies at the bottom of the diſtinction of divine perſons. We can only learn how they appear to be different perſons; which is all we can know of the difference of perſons.

Now, the Son of God appears to us another perſon than the Father, and the ſcripture repreſents him to us different from the Father, on theſe three accounts, on which he is called his Son.

I. *The proper product and object of the Father's love to us.*

The Son of God is ſhewed to be another than the Father, by his "ſending him forth made of a woman;" the "ſender," we know, muſt be another than his "ſent:" even as we know the "Holy Ghoſt" to be another than the "Father and the Son," by the "Son's ſending him to "us from the Father," calling him "another comforter." In the New Teſtament Jeſus is often ſpoke of as the "ſent "of God" and the "ſent of the Father." And this is taken from thoſe paſſages in the Old Teſtament, where we find him appearing in human likeneſs, forethewing his incarnation, and called "the Angel (*i. e.* the ſent) of the "Lord," and worſhipped as "the Angel Redeemer," the "Angel God's Face," the "Angel in whom is God's "Name," and the "Angel of the covenant." This is that "Angel" of the Lord; that is, he whom God "ſends" in a way peculiar to himſelf. And here is that "ſending" for which alone he, appearing of old to the fathers as a man, was called "the Angel," or, in the New Teſtament, the "Sent" of God, Gal. iv. 4. 5. "When the fulneſs of "the time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a "woman, made under the law, to redeem."

Now, in his "coming forth from the Father, who "ſent him forth," and in his "coming into the world," he is the only proper product of the Father's love towards us; whereby it appears fully in a gift anſwerable to the love that gave it: and therefore Jeſus is called "his only be-"gotten Son," and "the Son of his love." For "God ſo "loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." But, if Jeſus were not a divine perſon, of infinite dignity and worth,

worth, his coming forth from the Father, ſending him into the world, could not be the perfect product of the Father's love; and the gift would come infinitely ſhort of the grace that gave it. And therefore his being called the Son of God, on this account, ſuppoſes him to be God.

We do not, according to ſcripture, think of him as "the "Son," altogether abſtractly from his humanity. But, at the ſame time, we cannot think, with the ſcripture, of his "coming forth from God," without thinking of his divinity: for thus it was the diſciples thought of it when they believed it, John xvi. 30. "Now we are ſure that thou "knoweſt all things.—By this we believe that thou cameſt "forth from God."

John Baptiſt, teſtifying of Jeſus as "above all," among other things he ſays to this purpoſe, diſtinguiſhes him in theſe words, John iii. 35. "For the Father loveth the "Son." And, if we think of him as the proper object of the Father's love, for which he is called his "beloved Son," (as Iſaac was called Abraham's "only begotten, whom he "loved)," this alſo ſuppoſes his infinite worth; becauſe, without this, he could never be an object any way adequate to the divine love. God "ſaw every thing" in the firſt creation "good," as made by his "word." They were amiable to him in being ſo as the "Word ſaid." Therefore, Prov. chap. 8. he ſays, "I was daily his delight." Sinners of mankind are beloved only in him: "He hath made us "accepted in the Beloved." And, in the new creation, God ſhall rejoice in all his works gathered together in one in his beloved Son their head: for in Jeſus the divine love finds an object worthy of itſelf, even a divine object.

II. *The Father's perfect likeneſs.*

Again, he appears to be another than the Father, and to differ from him as his Son, by being his proper likeneſs. When he appeared as a man to the fathers, he was called "the Face of God." And it was the privilege of Moſes, to whom he "ſpake face to face," to "behold the ſimili-"tude of the Lord." Therefore Jeſus ſays to his diſciples, "He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father." And he is ſtyled "the image of the inviſible God."

It would ſeem, that men muſt have ſome image of God, and that they need ſome repreſentation of him to fix their minds upon in worſhipping him. The ſcripture points out

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt as the image of the inviſible God, in whoſe face the divine glory ſhines; forbidding us the uſe of any other image of God in his worſhip, as idolatry. And this is one great reaſon why we are forbid to make any image of God, that it changes the glory of God, and makes it leſs in the repreſentation; as the apoſtle ſays, "They changed "the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made "like to corruptible man." Yet the great deſign of ſcripture-revelation is to ſhew us the glory of God in the man Jeſus. And this is the reaſon why it often ſpeaks of the eternal, immortal, and inviſible God, as of a man with human paſſions and bodily parts. This will be underſtood by us when we perceive, that the man, who is the true image of God, is not a human, but a divine perſon, the Son of God; and ſo the Father is properly repreſented in him. Therefore, when the apoſtle ſets him forth (Heb. chap 1.) as the "brightneſs of his glory," and his "expreſs image," he then points him out as the ſame perſon "by whom he "made the worlds," and who "upholds all things by the "word of his power."

We may ſtay here a little to conſider how God ſays he would have himſelf repreſented among ſinners, when he forbids them to make any image whereby to worſhip him. He ſays in the ſecond commandment,

——"For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the "third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and "ſhewing mercy unto thouſands of them that love me, "and keep my commandments."

He would appear to men, and have them know him as the "jealous God," ſetting forth the covenant with Iſrael as a marriage-covenant, and every tranſgreſſion of his law, requiring love, as an appearance of hatred to him, and of the breach of covenant, provoking him to "jealouſy." Jealouſy belongs to love, and always ſuppoſes it. Solomon connects it with love when he ſays, "Love is ſtrong as "death, jealouſy is cruel as the grave." Jealouſy is the rage of injured love. When God would manifeſt himſelf to be "love," and ſhew the divine love in the way of "grace" and "mercy" among ſinners, as he ſays, "ſhew-"ing mercy to thouſands," then he will ſhew the "jealouſy" of his "love." If his mercy to ſinners appear, his wrath againſt ſin, *i. e.* the infinite oppoſition of his nature, which is love, unto every tranſgreſſion of his law requiring love, muſt

muſt appear alſo. Therefore he takes to himſelf the "name "Jealous," (Exod. xxxiv. 14.); which is ſaying in one word all that is proclaimed to Moſes (verſ. 5. 6. 7.) of the divine goodneſs and mercy forgiving ſin, and yet not clearing the guilty, as the name or character of Jehovah.

He propoſes to ſhew himſelf as the jealous "God" among ſinners of mankind, by uſing the divine prerogative of viſiting the iniquity of one upon another; even as we ſee in the goſpel the iniquities of the ungodly, and enemies to God, viſited upon Jeſus, to reconcile them to God. And of this we have a ſhadow or figure in the uſe of this divine prerogative in Iſrael; where God, who forbade even their kings to put the children to death for the iniquity of their parents, viſited the ſins of Manaſſeh upon the third and fourth generation at the captivity. When the Jews found fault with this as "unequal," (Ezek. chap. 18), by uſing this proverb to ſet it to the ridicule, "The fathers "have eaten ſour grapes, and the childrens teeth are "ſet on edge;" the Lord vindicates this uſe of the divine prerogative in theſe words: "All ſouls are mine, the ſoul "of the father and the ſoul of the ſon is mine." But, if they would not be ſatisfied in this, he ſhews them, that they behoved, every one, to live by his own righteouſneſs, or die by his own ſin. And ſo, being all ſinners, (for their ways were unequal), there could be no life for any of them, as none of them could turn himſelf from all unrighteouſneſs, and do that which is right, without turning aſide to any iniquity. In like manner ſays Jeſus to one in the goſpel, "If thou wouldſt enter into life, keep the com-"mandments;" and to another, "Thou ſhalt love the "Lord thy God with all thy heart, ſoul, and ſtrength, "and thy neighbour as thyſelf. This do, and thou ſhalt "live." And his apoſtle ſays to the ſame purpoſe, "If there "had been a law given which could have given life, verily "righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law; but the "ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin." And again, "As "many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe: "for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not "in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." And again, "I had not known ſin, — except the law had "ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet." The Lord foretells the time, by the prophet Jeremiah, when there would be no more occaſion for that proverb in the land of Iſrael; becauſe it was, in the fulneſs of time, to have its end, even as the ſacrifices,

ſacrifices, in him who is made ſin for ſinners, that they might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him. But, while God dealt in this manner with Iſrael, "viſiting the iniquity "of the fathers on the children," he thereby ſignified his viſiting Adam's iniquity on his poſterity, and his viſiting the iniquity of the thouſands to whom he ſhews mercy upon the promiſed ſeed Jeſus Chriſt. For it is impoſſible, without this way of viſiting iniquity, to know the name of the only true God as proclaimed to Moſes, "Keeping "mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity," and yet "not "clearing the guilty."

When he thus viſits the iniquity of thouſands that hated him, he thereby ſhews mercy to them, forgiving their iniquity: for they to whom he "ſhews mercy" are the ſame that "hated him," being "alienated and enemies in their "minds by wicked works," whoſe iniquities he viſits in this manner; ſeeing they that "love him, and keep his "commandments,' have no need of mercy, and cannot be the objects of pardoning grace. But, when ſinners, enemies to God, obtain mercy in this manner, this is the effect of it upon them, they become lovers of him; and that appears in their keeping of his commandments. The great trial of this obedience, in Iſrael, was in the law forbidding idolatry. And the trial of it in the New-teſtament church is in the commandment of love to one another, as believing in the name of the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleaſed. As to which the apoſtle John ſays, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." And, again, he ſays, "This is his commandment, that we "believe in the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one "another, as he gave us commandment. He that keepeth "his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him.

From what has been ſaid on the ſecond commandment, we may perceive, that Jeſus, "ſuffering for ſins, the juſt "for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God," is the true image of God. He repreſents him to us as "the jealous God," as "the righteous Father," whom the world knew not, till he manifeſted his "name;" and as "the "juſt God the Saviour," glorying in his juſtice and mercy over all idols, and every falſe god that men worſhipped. And ſo the apoſtle ſays, he that "purged our ſins by him-"ſelf," and "ſat down on the right hand of the Majeſty on "high," is the "brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the "expreſs image of his ground of glorying," Heb. i. 3.

Therefore alſo, in the account the Revelation gives us of the worſhip paid to this image of God, by the whole church, and the innumerable company of angels, we ſee the worſhippers conſider him as "the Lamb that was ſlain," alive from the dead, "in the midſt of the throne" or mercy-ſeat. See likewiſe Col. i. 14. 15.

Now, ſuppoſing Jeſus to be the moſt glorious creature, loving righteouſneſs, and hating iniquity moſt fervently, and undergoing the moſt intenſe ſufferings for the ſins of his people; this would ſtill come infinitely ſhort of a full repreſentation of the divine "jealouſy," or a perfect image of the "jealous God." The glory of the divine jealouſy would be changed, and made infinitely leſs in him that repreſents it, if he who is given to be the propitiation were not a divine perſon. And therefore they who do not believe him to be ſo, do as little believe this ſcripture-character of God. They heſitate as much in the confeſſion of the name of God as in the confeſſion of the name of the Son of God. They are ready to put the ſame queſtion as to both that was of old put concerning the firſt revelation to man, "Yea, hath God "ſaid?"

But, when we believe Jeſus to be a divine perſon, and conſider him as the Son of God, the perfect likeneſs of the Father, we then worſhip him in coming to the Father "through the vail of his fleſh," without any fear of worſhipping one who is not God, or of tranſgreſſing any command againſt idolatry.

His diſciples, who believed on him as the "Word made "fleſh, tabernacling with them," and ſo "beheld his glo-"ry, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," did alſo converſe familiarly with him as their brother-man, without any ſuch terror and dread of his majeſty, as the Iſraelites were poſſeſſed with upon hearing his voice from Sinai. For he was not always ſetting God before their eyes, as he did ſometimes when working the works of God. That was what they could not bear. Such a near view of the divine Majeſty ſet before them, made them "fear exceedingly," and "cry out," much like Iſrael at Sinai, "Depart from "me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord." But when they ſaw him thus, they then "ſaw the Father," who hath no other Godhead but the ſame that he ſhewed them in himſelf. Therefore he ſays to them, "Ye know him, and have "ſeen him." And, to the diſciple that aſked him to ſhew them the Father, he ſays, "Have I been ſo long time with "you,

" you, and yet haſt thou not known me? He that hath ſeen " me, hath ſeen the Father. Believeſt thou not, that I am " in the Father, and the Father in me?" Even as to that view of his glory which they had in believing on him as the Son of God, we cannot ſuppoſe, that they always had it in their familiar converſation with him. Neither have believers in him to this day always that view as oft as they think and ſpeak of him. And we find Jeſus ſometimes reproving them, as ſpeaking and acting diſagreeably to their faith. But, when their faith was by any means called up to exerciſe, then they " beheld his glory, the glory as of the " only begotten of the Father;" and ſo they " knew the " Father."

III. *The Father's proper heir.*

Jeſus is known to be another perſon than the Father, and is diſtinguiſhed from him as his Son, by being his " heir." He is " his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all " things," Heb. i. 2. John Baptiſt ſaid this of him when he teſtified, that he is the Son of God, John iii. 35. " The " Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his " hand." And Jeſus himſelf ſays, " All things are deliver- " ed unto me of my Father;" and again, " All things that " the Father hath are mine." He is the heir of all that he hath; like Iſaac the only begotten of Abraham; who gave gifts to his other children, but gave all to his only ſon Iſaac.

When he is called " the firſt-born of every creature," this plainly ſignifies, that he is among the creatures; even as his being called " the firſt-born from the dead," ſays, that he was among the dead. By being truly man, he ſtands in a connection both with the bodily and ſpiritual creation, both with the viſible and inviſible creatures: for man is the creature in whom they both, as it were, meet and ſtand connected. God has ſhewed his deſign to reſtore the creation that was made ſubject to vanity through the entrance of ſin, to " make all things new," and to " create new heavens, and " a new earth." And the execution of this glorious deſign, has its beginning in the man born of the Virgin, that holy thing which is called the Son of God. The new creation begins in that which was born of her through the power of the Higheſt overſhadowing her. And the exceeding greatneſs of the might of his power that wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own

right hand, head over all things to his body the church, is the beginning of that ſtrength whereby the new heavens and the new earth ſhall be created. Therefore he calls himſelf "the beginning of the creation of God," Rev. iii. 14. Jacob gave a deſcription of the firſt-born; when, ſpeaking of his own firſt-born, and declaring Reuben unfit for that dignity, he ſaid,—"My firſt-born, my might, and the beginning of my ſtrength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power," Gen. xlix. 3. Theſe words have their full force, when applied to God's firſt-born, the beginning of his ſtrength in the new creation. The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power and dominion over the creation, becomes him, and is moſt proper to him, without any thing like a competitor among the creatures. And the apoſtle gives this good reaſon for it, (Col. i. 15. 16. 17.), "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt."

Agreeably to this it is ſaid, (Heb. i. 1. 2.), "that God appointed the Son heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds." He is fit to inherit all that God hath, and to give his brethren of mankind a title to it, as joint heirs with him, by his being that divine perſon by whom all things were created. And God's inheritance is due to the righteouſneſs that Jeſus wrought for his brethren, as its reward; becauſe it is the righteouſneſs of the Son of God.

THE WORD OF GOD.

REV. xix. 13.

——*His name is called THE WORD OF GOD.*

A Heathen author gives theſe words of Moſes as a notable inſtance of the ſublime, "God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light:" for nothing could be ſaid more grand, or more becoming God. This diſtinguiſhes him as God from all created and dependent beings, that what he pleaſes to ſay is done as ſaid, that "he ſaid, Let it be, and it was." The Pſalmiſt points out this, as the matter of the divine praiſe, to all the creatures,

Pſal.

Pſal. cxlviii. 5. " Let them praiſe the name of the Lord: " for he commanded, and they were created." And he calls upon men to worſhip him on this very account, Pſal. xxxiii. 6. 8. 9. " By the word of the Lord were the hea- " vens made, and all the hoſt of them by the ſpirit of his " mouth. — Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inha- " bitants of the world ſtand in awe of him. For he ſpake, " and it was; he commanded, and it ſtood." For this gives men an awful view of the eternal power and godhead that is ſhewed to them in the things that are made. And this view we have by revelation. For " by faith we under- " ſtand that the worlds were framed BY THE WORD OF " GOD " And the apoſtle Peter ſays, the ſcoffers at ſcripture-revelation are willingly ignorant of this, " that by the word " of God the heavens were of old, and the earth ſtanding " out of the water, and in the water. Whereby the world " that then was, being overflowed with water, periſhed. But " the heavens and the earth which are now, by the ſame " word are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire againſt the day " of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men."

Abraham, the father of the faithful, when he believed God's word calling him the " father of many nations," conſidered God as " calling thoſe things that be not as though " they were;" and ſo he was fully perſuaded, that the word of God, calling him a father, would take effect, againſt all appearances to the contrary.

And, in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, the only true God diſtinguiſhes himſelf from all falſe gods, by the operation of his word; or by this, that he ſays, and it is ſo. We may take theſe inſtances.

Iſ. xliii. 12. " I have declared, and have ſaved, and I " have ſhewed, when there was no ſtrange god among you: " therefore ye are my witneſſes, ſaith the Lord, that I am " God."

Chap. xliv. 7. 8. " And who, as I, ſhall call, and ſhall " declare it, and ſet it in order for me, ſince I appointed " the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and " ſhall come? — Have not I told thee from that time, and " have declared? Ye are my witneſſes. Is there a God be- " ſides me?"

Chap. xlviii. 3. " I have declared the former things from " the beginning: and they went forth out of my mouth, " and I ſhewed them, I did them ſuddenly, and they came " to paſs."

Verſ.

Verſ. 5. " I have even from the beginning declared to " thee; before it came to paſs I ſhewed thee: leſt thou " ſhouldſt ſay, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven " image, and my molten image hath commanded them."

Verſ. 12. 13. 14. " Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and " Iſrael, my called, I am he, I am the firſt, I alſo am the " laſt. Mine hand alſo hath laid the foundation of the " earth, and my right hand hath ſpanned the heavens. I " call unto them, they ſtand up together. All ye aſſemble " yourſelves and hear: which among them hath declared " theſe?"

When John calls the Son of God " the Word," and ſays, he " was in the beginning," and that " all things were " made by him," (John chap. 1.), he plainly refers to the account that Moſes gave of the creation, which repreſents the action of the three divine perſons in that work, and points out the proper agency of the Son of God, by ſpeaking, " God ſaid, Let it be, and it was." For, in all divine works, the manner of working proper to this perſon, is repreſented to us in the very ſame way: he " upholds all " things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. And when he himſelf tells us, that he works alſo with the Father in the divine work of raiſing the dead, he ſets before us this his own proper manner of working in that work of God, John v. 25. 28. 29. " Verily verily I ſay unto you, The hour is " coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice " of the Son of God; and they that hear ſhall live. — Mar- " vel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all " that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come " forth, they that have done good, unto the reſurrection " of life; and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrec- " tion of damnation."

This may lead us to think of that moſt ancient and venerable ſymbol or ſign of the divine preſence, " the voice," that ſtruck the minds of men with an awful ſenſe and dread of the divine majeſty, making them thoroughly ſenſible of the preſence of Jehovah.

Gen. iii. 8. 10. " They heard the voice of the Lord God " walking in the garden in the cool of the day. —— I " heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid."

Heb. xii. 19. 26. — " And the voice of words, which they " that heard, intreated that the word ſhould not be ſpoken " to them any more. — Whoſe voice then ſhook the earth."

Exod. xix. 19. — " God anſwered him in the voice." Num.

vii.

vii. 89. — " Moſes — heard the voice of one ſpeaking unto " him from off the mercy-ſeat."

1 Kings xix. 11. 12. 13. — " And behold, the Lord paſſed " by, and a great and ſtrong wind rent the mountains, and " brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; the Lord not " in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; the " Lord not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a " fire; the Lord not in the fire: and after the fire a ſtill " ſmall voice. And it was, when Elijah heard, that he " wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and ſtood " in the entering of the cave: and behold, the voice was " to him, and ſaid, What doſt thou here, Elijah?"

Pſal. lxviii. 33. — " Lo, he gives, in his voice, the voice " of ſtrength."

By the ſigns and miracles that Jeſus did to ſhew himſelf to be the Son of God, he appears to be the ſame who ſaid in the creation, " Let there be light, and there was light." He ſhews himſelf working theſe divine works as it becomes God to work. Take theſe inſtances.

Mark v. 41. 42. " And he took the damſel by the hand, " and ſaith unto her, Talitha-cumi, which is, being inter- " preted, Damſel, (I ſay unto thee), ariſe. And ſtraight- " way the damſel aroſe, and walked."

Luke vii. 14. 15. — " And he ſaid, Young man, I ſay un- " to thee, Ariſe. And he that was dead, ſat up, and began " to ſpeak."

John xi. 43. 44. " He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, " come forth. And he that was dead came forth."

Matth. xii. 10. 13. " Then ſaith he to the man," (whoſe hand was withered), " Stretch forth thine hand: and he " ſtretched it forth."

Mark ii. 9. — 12. — " Whether is it eaſier to ſay to the " ſick of the palſy, Thy ſins be forgiven thee? or to ſay, " Ariſe, and take up thy bed and walk? But, that ye may " know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive " ſins, he ſaith to the ſick of the palſy, I ſay unto thee, " Ariſe, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine " houſe. And immediately he aroſe, and took up the bed, " and went forth."

Chap. iv. 39. 41. " And he aroſe, and rebuked the wind, " and ſaid unto the ſea, Peace, be ſtill: and the wind cea- " ſed, and there was a great calm. — And they feared exceed- " ingly, and ſaid, What manner of man is this, that even " the wind and the ſea obey him?"

Matth.

Matth. viii. 5.—11. The Centurion, who, ſeeing him in the form of a ſervant, ſaid to him, " I am not worthy that thou " ſhouldſt come under my roof: but ſpeak the word only, " and my ſervant ſhall be healed," acknowledged him in the ſtrongeſt manner to be God, even under that form, believing him to be the ſame that ſaid in the beginning, " Let " there be light, and there was light." And therefore Jeſus ſaid upon it, " I have not found ſo great faith, no not " in Iſrael;" ſignifying at the ſame time, that this ſhould be faith of all thoſe of every nation that " ſhall ſit down with " Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."

In every divine work, the divine three act inſeparably, as they are one and the ſame God, however diſtinguiſhed from one another. The Son always ſpeaks the mind of the Father. " He declares," John i. 18. And what he ſays, muſt be by the almighty energy of the Holy Ghoſt, the " ſpirit of his " mouth," always making it ſo as he ſays, according to the mind of the Father; who therefore " ſees it good." So it was in the creation, according to the account of Moſes. So it is in all the divine works. And in them all the Son is he that " ſays and it is done, commands and it ſtands faſt." Therefore he is diſtinguiſhed to us by the name of " the " Word of God."

The Father and the Holy ghoſt both teſtify of him. When the Father teſtifies of him as his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleaſed, he refers men to him as the ſpeaker of his mind, the ſpeaker of the words of God, ſaying, " Hear ye " him." And when the Holy Ghoſt inſpired the prophets, to declare the words of God concerning the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the following glory, he teſtified in them as " the Spirit of Chriſt," who is the ſpeaker of the words of God, 1 Pet. i. 11.—" What—the Spirit of Chriſt which was " in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſuf- " ferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow." John Baptiſt, ſetting forth the excellency of Jeſus as the Son of God, ſpeaks of him as ſent of the Father, and furniſhed with the Holy Ghoſt in his human nature, to attend upon his words, and make them effectual; and diſtinguiſhes him from all others, as the ſpeaker of the divine words, John iii. 31. 33. 34.—" He that is of the earth, is earthly, and ſpeaketh " of the earth: he that cometh from heaven, is above all. " He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal, " that God is true. For he whom God hath ſent, ſpeaketh " the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by mea- " ſure."

" ſure." And therefore he ſpeaks (verſ. 36.) of eternal life and damnation as attending on his words.

We ſee the divine Three diſtinguiſhed and all concurring in that grand divine work of making the Word fleſh. In that work, the Father appears as ſending him forth, made of a woman, made under the law. On account of which " ſend-" ing," he was in the Old Teſtament called " the Angel of " the Lord," when he appeared in human likeneſs for ſhewing his incarnation; and in the New Teſtament, " the Sent " of God." And his human ſoul and body was conceived holy in the womb of the Virgin by the energy of the Holy Ghoſt, and was prepared to the Son of God by the power of the Higheſt overſhadowing her. But the Word himſelf wrought alſo in his being made fleſh. He came forth from the Father, and came into the world. He took hold of that ſeed of Abraham, even that holy thing conceived by the Virgin; ſo that it became his own ſoul and his own body. And this he is ſaid to have done by ſpeaking: for thus we ſee his work, in taking part with us of fleſh and blood, deſcribed to us, Pſal. xl. and Heb. x. 5. 6. 7. — " When he " cometh into the world, he ſaith, Sacrifice and offering " thou wouldſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me, "—Then ſaid I, Lo, I come — to do thy will, O God." This " ſaying" made the body prepared him, his own body. This " ſaying" made all that was done and ſuffered in that body, when offered up, the doing and ſuffering of no other perſon but the eternal Word, the perſon that ſaid, " Lo, I " come to do thy will." And when it was ſo as he ſaid, the Father ſaw it good, and teſtified of Jeſus, " Thou art my " beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed;" even as when he ſaid in the creation, " Let there be light, and there was " light," the Father " ſaw the light, that it was good."

He did the will of the Father, in the offering of his body a ſacrifice to him, for the manifeſtation of the divine juſtice in the remiſſion of ſins. And he offered up himſelf " with-" out ſpot, through the eternal Spirit;" by which alſo he had been conceived holy in the womb. But his own proper part in this work, wherein the Father and the Holy Ghoſt were thus concurring, was the " offering up of himſelf." And this he did in thoſe prayers and ſupplications wherein he preſented himſelf, in the name of his people, before the Father, as his Son, obedient to the utmoſt ſelf-denial, in the extremity of his ſufferings, and cried for ſalvation from that death to which he ſubmitted for his people, Heb. v. 7.

8. And the Father heard his voice, becauſe it was the voice of his Son, and ſaved him from death. See the power of this voice calling to the Father deſcribed by the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. xviii. 6. 7. &c.

We find his reſurrection, that great divine work, aſcribed to the Father, as well pleaſed in his obedience to the death for his people, and rewarding it with eternal life from the dead. And it is alſo aſcribed to the power of the Holy Ghoſt quickening him. But he himſelf ſays, "I have power "to take my life again." He was "brought again from "the dead by the blood of the everlaſting covenant," his own blood. And his reſurrection was the effect of his interceſſion, when he "poured out his ſoul unto death," making "interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors." It was the effect of "the voice of his blood," the ſame voice that ſhook the earth at Sinai, Heb. xii. 24. 25. 26. The Pſalmiſt deſcribes it in this manner, Pſal. xxi. 2. 4. "Thou haſt not with-"holden the requeſt of his lips.—He aſked life of thee; "thou gaveſt him length of days for ever and ever."

When we conſider the Word made fleſh as mediator between God and men, acting for us to the Father, and again in his name towards us, as he ſays, "I will declare thy name "unto my brethren; in the midſt of the church will I ſing "praiſe unto thee;" we may ſee him in this office as the ſpeaker of the word of power, and ſo having power with God and with men. And we have a ſample of both in the reſurrection of Lazarus, John xi. 41.—44. "Jeſus lift up "his eyes, and ſaid, Father, I thank thee, that thou haſt "heard me. And I knew that thou heareſt me always; "but, becauſe of the people which ſtand by, I ſaid it, that "they may believe that thou haſt ſent me. And when he "had thus ſpoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, "come forth. And he that was dead came forth."

Acting in our name toward the Father, he aſks, and obtains whatſoever he aſks. He ſays, and it is done. For the Father hears the voice of his Son always. He intercedes by his own blood, ſpeaking better things than Abel's, and ſtill prevails with the Father.

Pſal. ii. 7. 8. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath "ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten "thee. Aſk of me, and I ſhall give the heathen thine in-"heritance."

John xiv. 16. "I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give "you

" you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for " ever."

Luke xxii. 31. " I have prayed for thee, that thy faith " fail not."

Heb. vii. 25. — " He is able — to ſave them to the utter- " moſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth " to make interceſſion for them."

And acting in the Father's name towards us, he ſpeaks to us. He declares his Father's name to his brethren, gives them his words, makes them alive from treſpaſſes and ſins by his voice, and makes them clean through the word that he has ſpoken to them. The dead in their graves ſhall hear his voice, and come forth. And the word that he has ſpoken, ſhall judge us in the laſt day. For this is the ſharp ſword that goeth out of his mouth, wherewith he ſhall ſmite the nations, Rev. xix. 15. with Heb. iv. 12.

Now, becauſe he is the ſpeaker of the word of power, whereby all things were created and are upheld, whereby the dead are raiſed and judged, and whereby the wicked are deſtroyed, and his own people eternally ſaved; and becauſe heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but his words ſhall not paſs away: therefore " his name is called the Word of " God."

Man made in the Image of God.

GEN. i. 26.

And God ſaid, Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſs.

MOſes repreſents God, in making the world, as ſpeaking, as working according to the ſpeaking, and as ſatisfied in the work done as ſaid, Gen. i. 14. 16. 18. 20. 21. 24. 25.

The energy is aſcribed to the Spirit of God, verſ. 2. " And " the ſpirit of God moved * upon the face of the waters." He appears in like manner in the work of redemption, as " the power of the Higheſt overſhadowing."

And the ſatisfaction in the work done as ſaid, may appear proper to the Father, from Prov. viii. 27.—30. where Wiſdom ſays, " Then was I by him: — and I was daily his

* Compare Deut. xxxii. 11. in the Hebrew.

" delight." For this explains what was said by Moſes in the concluſion of the works of the ſeveral days, " And God " ſaw that it was good." The Father appears the ſame way in the work of redemption: " This is my beloved Son, in " whom I am well pleaſed."

It remains, that the agency of the Son ſhould be repreſented, in theſe words, " God ſaid." We have ſeen this imported in his name " the Word of God," and that he appears even ſo in the work of redemption, John i. 18. " No " man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, " which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared."

He ſays here, " Let us make man." It has been obſerved, that the plural divine name ELOHIM ſeems originally deſigned to intimate the plurality of divine perſons in the ſame one Godhead which is aſſerted in the name JEHOVAH, Deut. vi. 4. " Jehovah our Elohim one Jeho- " vah:" and ſo it is ſaid here, " Let us make." This obſervation is much ſupported by Gen. iii. 22. " And Jehovah " Elohim ſaid, Behold, man is become like one of us." And the peculiar connection of the divine perſons, working inſeparably in every divine work, is ground ſufficient for calling any one of them by the common name Elohim.

" In our image, after our likeneſs." And, verſ. 27. " So God created man in his own image, in the image of " God created he him."

The apoſtle ſuppoſes this to be in view, when, ſpeaking of our recovery from the corruption of ſin, he ſays, (Eph. iv. 24.), " Put on the new man, which after God is created " in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs." And, Col. iii. 10.— " The new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after " the image of him that created him."

Man was made to know, and to love God. Righteouſneſs and holineſs in man is his conformity to the divine law, which requires " love," as " God is love." The goſpel, that manifeſts him more fully to be love, (1 John iv. 8. 9. 10.), calls us to be followers of him, as dear children walking in love; and points out this to us as " righteouſ- " neſs," (John iii. 4. 7. 10.), " and holineſs," 1 Pet. i. 22. Eph. i. 4.— " That we ſhould be holy, and without " blame before him in love."

When our Lord gives the ſum of the law, that is, the rule of righteouſneſs and holineſs to man, (Matth. xxii. 36.—40.), he refers to theſe words of Moſes, (Deut. vi. 4. 5.), " Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God in all thy heart, and " in

" in all thy ſoul, and in all thy might." In place of " thy " might" in Moſes, we have in Matthew " thy mind." And Mark and Luke give us both " ſtrength" and " mind" for it.

Here we ſee that in man which is capable of knowing and loving God, plainly diſtinguiſhed into three. And in each of theſe three he ſhould love the Lord his God, in his whole " heart," and in his whole " ſoul," and in his whole " mind." The ſame diſtinction is intimated to us in other words by the apoſtle, 1 Theſſ. v. 23. " And the very God " of peace ſanctify you wholly, and your whole ſpirit and " ſoul and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of " our Lord Jeſus Chriſt." The " body" here cannot be conſidered abſtractly from the principle of life. It muſt be the body as living: for ſo only is it capable of " blame" or of " ſanctification." And by this we may perceive, that it is the ſame very thing in man, which knows and loves God, or is blameable in diſaffection to him, that animates, or enlivens his body. Again, we have this ſame diſtinction inſinuated, Heb. iv. 12. " For the word of God is quick, and " powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing " even to the dividing aſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit, and " of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts " and intents of the HEART."

That one thing which lives in man, is called in diſtinction from the fleſh, which it animates, ſometimes the " heart," ſometimes the " ſpirit of a man," and ſometimes the " ſoul;" as in Pſal. xvi. 9. 10. with Acts ii. 26. 27. 31.— " His ſoul was not left in hades, neither his fleſh did ſee " corruption." His ſoul did not remain in the ſeparate ſtate till his fleſh corrupted in the grave. Yet this ſame " ſoul," diſtinguiſhed from the " fleſh," or this ſame " ſpirit," diſtinguiſhed from the " duſt that returns to the " earth, (Eccl. xii. 7.), is again diſtinguiſhed into three, by the names of *heart*, and *ſoul*, and *mind*.

The making of man is deſcribed (Gen. ii. 7.) in this manner: " And the Lord God formed man duſt from the " ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of " LIVES *, and man became a living ſoul."

God breathed into his noſtrils the breath of three diſtinct lives. 1. Man was made to live by his breath a life the ſame with the plants. Plants have a life; they are nouriſhed; they generate their kind; they grow from a ſeed; they die: but they have not the ſenſitive life.

* See the Hebrew.

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The ſpirit of the beaſt, that animates its fleſh, lives in it the life that is in the plants. The beaſts grow up from a ſeed; they are nouriſhed, and their blood circulates by their breath; and they generate their kind, and die, as the plants. Even ſo does man. And though this vegetative life in animals be moſt intimately connected with the ſenſitive, yet it is really diſtinct from it; becauſe we ſee it in the plants without ſenſe.

But this is peculiar to man, even as to this ſame life that is common to him with the plant and the brute, that he is accountable to God upon it. It is, in him, under the direction of the divine law, by which he is judged. And he is blameable in paſſing the bounds ſet there, even as to his eating and drinking, and generating his ſpecies. He muſt love God in this whole life, ſo that every action and enjoyment of it may be pure from any ſtain of that enmity which ſhews itſelf in diſobedience to God's law. For the thoughts and intents of man's heart affect his ſtomach, and nouriſhment, and the circulation of his blood, and the power of generating his kind. This whole life in man was engaged in the firſt tranſgreſſion, and was forfeited by that tranſgreſſion, by which he became mortal, Gen. iii. 19.

2. Man was made to live by his breath that ſame life which the beaſts alſo have, in diſtinction from the plants. The beaſts have a life diſtinct from that which is common to them with the plants. They have ſenſation and reflection, and they have the paſſions; as man alſo hath. But, however this life in man be connected with that life which is peculiar to him; yet it muſt be truly diſtinct from that. It muſt be really another life; becauſe we find it in the beaſts in all its variety of action and enjoyment, without any capacity of that correſpondence with God which man has in the life that is peculiar to him.

And this is proper to man, even with reſpect to the life that he lives in common with the beaſts, that in him it is under the direction of the divine law, and of the knowledge he hath of the judgment of God, whereof the beaſts are incapable. He is blameable and chargeable with enmity againſt God, in paſſing the bound his law ſets to all the actions and enjoyments of this life that is common to him with the beaſts. For as God makes himſelf known to man by means of his ſenſations and reflections; ſo his love or hatred to God manifeſted to him, moves and conducts all his

his paſſions, and influences that whole life that he has in common with the brutes. This whole life was alſo engaged in the firſt tranſgreſſion, and was forfeited by that diſobedience. He became ſubject to the miſeries of the paſſions of ſhame, fear, and ſorrow, till he expired.

3. God breathed into man's noſtrils the breath of another life proper to himſelf, in diſtinction from the plants and brutes. He inſpired him with the knowledge and love of himſelf, and with that ſenſe of his favour and love which is the proper happineſs of man. The reverſe of this life that the ſoul of innocent man lived in the body, is alienation from God, with the ſenſe of his diſpleaſure, which is the miſery proper to man, and is called "death;" as life is ſaid to lie in his favour, and the light of his countenance. Thus man died that day he eat of the forbidden tree. He became alienated from God, loſt the bliſsful ſenſe of his favour; and ſo became aſhamed and afraid, as ſenſible of the divine diſpleaſure, which his conſcience ſhewed him he juſtly deſerved.

Thus we may ſee God breathed into that which he formed of the duſt of the ground, the "breath" of three diſtinct "lives:" And this man was yet but one "living "ſoul." So he was made after the likeneſs of Elohim. If it ſhall be thought that this is going too nicely to work with the Hebrew ſingular and plural; then let it be conſidered, that the ſtyle of Moſes is very nice and exact, in this paſſage, as to the ſingular and plural. See his words: "In the image of Elohim created he HIM, male and fe-"male created he THEM." And ſee how the apoſtle builds upon this, 1 Cor. xi. 7. "The man is the image "and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the "man."

However immaterial the human ſoul be, we have no reaſon to think it capable to live at all without matter, or without any body. For, when it is diveſted of its own body by death, it is not quite naked in that ſeparate ſtate, but clothed with another manſion or vehicle, wherein it lives as in the body. And when Paul was caught up into the third heaven, and converſed there, he ſays he cannot tell whether he was in his own body, or out of it. Now, the ſoul clothed with that manſion, muſt move and actuate it as its body, and ſo live in it. And it muſt likewiſe have ſuitable ſenſations by it, with reflections on them, ſeeing and hearing; as Paul heard words; and as Moſes, not in his

his own body, converſed with Jeſus at the transfiguration. And, in that manſion, it muſt alſo have ſome kind of correſpondence with God. So it will ſtill live all the three lives while it lives at all. For when it ſhall be reunited to its own body, however that body be changed, it muſt be enlivened, moved, and actuated by the ſoul. By means of it, the ſoul muſt have ſuitable ſenſations, with reflections on theſe. And it ſhall alſo have a correſpondence with God in the body. So it will live the three diſtinct lives for ever.

Now, when man was made to know and to love God in his whole heart, in his whole ſoul, and in his whole mind, the image of Elohim was ſtamped on that frame which God made of duſt from the ground. And this earthy frame, made a living ſoul by God's breathing into it the breath of lives, may yet further be ſaid to be made after God's likeneſs, as being made to prefigure the ſecond Adam, the head of the new creation, even that "heavenly man," who is "the Lord," and the true and only perfect image of God.

For the firſt creation, when it was finiſhed in man, was not the great work that God intended. He had in view that new creation, whereof the laſt Adam, who is the Lord, is the head. He makes a more perfect diſcovery of God among the creatures, and unites them with God in himſelf, in a far more glorious manner, than could be done in the firſt man Adam, who was but "the type of him to "come," Rom. v. 14.

The apoſtle diſtinguiſhes the firſt Adam, the type, from the ſecond, who comes after him, as prefigured by him, in this manner, 1 Cor. xv. 45. 46. 47.—"The firſt man A-"dam was made a living ſoul, the laſt Adam a quickening "ſpirit. Howbeit that was not firſt which is ſpiritual, but "that which is natural; and afterward that which is ſpi-"ritual. The firſt man of the earth, earthy; the ſecond "man the Lord from heaven." He diſtinguiſhes the ſoul of the ſecond man, as animating his body raiſed from the dead; and this life from the dead is communicated from him to all his people, that bear his image in the reſurrection. The laſt Adam is made a "quickening ſpirit." He diſtinguiſhes the body of the laſt Adam as raiſed from the dead, now in heaven, and heavenly, and as it will appear when he ſhall come from thence at the reſurrection of the

juſt,

juſt, " the heavenly," verſ. 48. 49. And he diſtinguiſhes the ſecond man from the firſt, by his being " the Lord."

The natural earthy man, who was firſt, was made to prefigure the ſpiritual and heavenly man who comes after him, and is the Lord: *1ſt*, In his dominion, Pſal. viii. with Heb. ii. 5.—9. *2dly*, In his union with the church, partaking with him in that dominion, Eph. v. 25.—30. *3dly*, In his headſhip, repreſenting his people, Rom. v. 14.—19. *4thly*, In his life in the true paradiſe, Rev. ii. 9. *&c.*

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER II.

Concerning PREDESTINATION; The IMPUTATION of SIN and RIGHTEOUSNESS; and, The NATURE and EFFECTS of JUSTIFYING FAITH.

LUKE x. 26. *What is written in the law? how readeſt thou?* ROM. iv. 3. *What ſaith the ſcripture?*

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1748.]

PREDESTINATION.

ROMANS ix. 1.—5.

I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lie not, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt, that I have great heavineſs and continual ſorrow in my heart (for I myſelf was wiſhing to be accurſed from Chriſt) for my brethren my kinſmen according to the fleſh: who are Iſraelites, whoſe the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving, and the worſhip, and the promiſes, whoſe the fathers, and of whom Chriſt according to the fleſh, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Amen.

THE apoſtle had been, in the foregoing chapter, declaring, that nothing could ſeparate him, or any of the called according to God's purpoſe, from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus: and here he turns his diſcourſe to the oppoſite ſtate of the Jews, his brethren according to the fleſh; and declares their ſeparation from Chriſt, and from God's love which is in him.

His introduction to the manifeſtation of this ſad truth, ſerves to ſhew, that it comes not according to his own mind and

Iſrael from the rejected, whereof the diſtinction of Jacob from Eſau is a figure, is "not of him that willeth, nor of "him that runneth, but of God having mercy," verſ. 16.

But now, if God have mercy on whom he will, then he has not mercy on every one; and there muſt be ſome on whom he has not compaſſion, as Paul's brethren who were not called, like him, but ſeparated from Chriſt. And to them he applies, verſ. 17. what the ſcripture ſaith to Pharaoh, Exod. ix. 16. For it was not owing to their having done any more evil than he was doing, that they were not called as well as he. And ſo, from what the ſcripture ſays to Pharaoh, with what was ſaid to Moſes, he again infers, verſ. 18. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will, and "whom he will he hardeneth." For, from Exod. ix. 16. compared with Exod. iii. 19. & iv. 21. & vii. 3. 4. it manifeſtly appears, that the giving up of Pharaoh's heart to reſiſt the divine call to him, was from the beginning a work of ſovereignty, and not of judgment. There was no judgment done on Pharaoh, till he was fitted for it by his obſtinate refuſal to ſubmit to the call. But before that call came to him, the Lord told Moſes, he knew he would not ſubmit to it by any means; and he ſaid expreſsly, that he would "harden his heart," and ſo fit him for judgment. Nor did that king of Egypt any hurt to the Iſraelites to bring judgments on him and his nation, but what had been made known to Abraham of a ſurety long before that Pharaoh was born, Gen. xv. 13. 14. Now, the words of the ſcripture to Pharaoh are very applicable to the rejected Iſrael, "Even "for this ſame purpoſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might "ſhew my power in thee, and that my name might be de- "clared throughout all the earth." See chap. xi. 11.— "Through their fall ſalvation unto the Gentiles."

Againſt this divine conduct toward Pharaoh, and toward the rejected Iſrael, there is an objection which men are very ready to make. The apoſtle takes notice of it, and expreſſes its main ſtrength in theſe few words, verſ. 19. "Thou wilt then ſay unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? "for who hath reſiſted his will?" If it was his will that the heart of Pharaoh and the hearts of the Jews ſhould be hardened againſt him, how could he make that hardneſs their fault? And ſeeing it is impoſſible for them to reſiſt his will, why does he condemn and puniſh them for chuſing to do what, for his irreſiſtible will, they could not but chuſe?

From this objection thus ſtated by the apoſtle, we may

ſee

ſee that we have his meaning in what he ſaid before. The objection lies only againſt the ſenſe that has been given of God's "hardening whom he will." And his anſwer is far from ſetting the thing in another light: for he calls the objection a "reply againſt God," and ſtill inſiſts upon his ſovereignty.

As he is ſpeaking for God, he accounts not for the divine conduct to objecting men, in the manner wherein a man gives account of his conduct when he vindicates it to other men excepting againſt it. The apoſtle ſpeaks here to objecting men, as having no claim upon their maker, no right to object againſt his procedure, and no power to call him to an account with them. And he ſpeaks to them as not having a mind or underſtanding capable to take in a full account of the ways of the infinitely wiſe God. As he ſays, chap. xi. 33. 34. 35.—"His ways paſt finding out. For who "hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his "counſellor? Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall "be recompenſed unto him again?" even ſo here he ſtops the mouths of objectors with theſe words of God brought from the Old Teſtament, verſ. 20. "Nay but, O man, who "art thou that replieſt againſt God? ſhall the thing form-"ed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me "thus?"

Theſe words are not taken from Jer. xviii. 4. 6. as ſome would have it. For neither are theſe words there, nor is there any mention in that whole paſſage of the ſame matter on which this objection and the apoſtle's anſwer goes. That paſſage ſpeaks of diſtributive juſtice and judgment according to works, and not at all of the ſovereignty, againſt which this objection plainly points. But there are two paſſages in Iſaiah's prophecy, where we find much the ſame words, and both theſe paſſages have a plain reference to the apoſtle's ſubject; as we ſhall ſee by conſidering them, in order to perceive the uſe he makes of them in his anſwer to the objection.

The firſt of theſe paſſages is If. xxix. 16. 17. "Surely "your ſubverſion," or overthrow, "ſhall be eſteemed as the "potters clay: for ſhall the work ſay of him that made it; "He made me not? or ſhall the thing framed ſay of him "that framed it, He had no underſtanding? Is it not yet a "very little while, and Lebanon ſhall be turned into a "fruitful field, and the fruitful field ſhall be eſteemed as a "foreſt?" The word that our tranſlators have rendered

"turning

" turning of things upside down," signifies properly subversion; and it is the same word that is used, Gen. xix. 29. to signify the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrha. Now, seeing Isaiah is plainly prophesying here of the subversion of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; it was very proper for the apostle, speaking of that same subject, to point to this passage.

And the second is Is. xlv. 9. " Wo to him that striveth " with his maker," as " a potsherd with the potsherds of the " earth: shall the clay say to its former, What wilt thou " make? or thy work, He hath no hands?" If we consider the scope of the passage where these words stand, and look toward the beginning of the chapter, we shall see Jehovah the God of Israel speaking to Cyrus, vers. 1. to whom he says, vers. 4. 5. " I have surnamed thee, though " thou hast not known me;" and " I girded thee, though " thou hast not known me." And to this Cyrus he declares himself so as all may know him to be the only God, in a plain and direct opposition to the two principles of the Magians, represented by " light" and " darkness;" the one the necessary original of all good, and the other of all evil. These were the gods acknowledged by Cyrus the Persian, who knew not the true God; who therefore says to him, vers. 5. 6. 7. " I Jehovah, and none else, no God besides " me. —— None besides me, I Jehovah, and none else. I " form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and " create evil: I Jehovah do all these." When he brought this world out of nothing, darkness covered the face of the abyss. And out of this darkness that he created, he formed the light; he commanded it to shine out of darkness. And when he created the earth, or gave it being, it was without form, a confused mass of discordant parts, out of which he made this beautiful order that we see in the world. And, in like manner, as he brought light out of darkness, and order out of confusion, when he made the world; even so he tells Cyrus, that all things that come to pass in the heavens and the earth which he hath made, are working together, at his appointment, to bring forth " righteousness" and " sal- " vation." He says, vers. 8. " Drop down, ye heavens, " from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: " let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, " and let righteousness spring up together: I Jehovah " have created it." Even as the influences of the heavens, the dew and rain, and the opening of the earth,

contribute to the bringing forth of that which springs of the earth; so all that comes to pass in heaven and earth, shall issue in righteousness and salvation together, even that "everlasting salvation," verse. 17. wherewith "Israel shall be saved." We know "salvation" necessarily supposes "evil" to be saved from. And in this salvation he will shew himself both merciful and righteous, and so distinguish himself from all false gods. For as he distinguishes himself to Cyrus by the righteousness and salvation he makes spring up together, so he distinguishes himself to another sort of idolaters, the worshippers of images, in the latter part of the same chapter, by the same thing, when he says, verse. 20. 21. 22. "They have no knowledge that set up the "wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that "cannot save. —— I Jehovah, and no God else beside me, "a JUST God and a SAVIOUR, none beside me. Look "unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for "I am God, and there is none else." But they who see not the glory of that great salvation, whereby the infinitely "Merciful" and "Just" shews the riches of his glory to his chosen Israel in all the ends of the earth, will still think it better there had been no evil in the world to be saved from, and so be replying against God. And whereas the Magi were led in to think of their two principles, or opposite gods, by the difficulty about the "origin of evil;" that difficulty recurs upon the Lord's saying, "I form the light, and "create darkness." And he stops the mouths of objectors, with these words, "Wo to him that striveth with his maker. "—— Shall the clay say to its former, What wilt thou make?" And as the apostle says the same, Rom. ix. 20. it is easy to perceive how proper it is for him there to refer to this remarkable passage.

Let us next see how he applies what the Lord spake, by Isaiah, of the potter and clay, to his subject; and what use he makes of it in answer to the objection. He says, verse. 21. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same "lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto "dishonour?"

Man can have no right to contend with his maker, or to object against his fitting him to any use he pleases, as he may have to contend with his fellow creatures. For God's power over his creatures, cannot be less than that of the potter over the clay, of which he makes vessels at it pleases him. And man is as unfit to be his maker's counsellor, as the

the clay is to direct the potter. Now, the potter, of the same lump of clay, makes, at his pleasure, one vessel to a honourable use, and another to a dishonourable or baser use. And so the question which the apostle is answering, comes to the same with this, Why is it put to that dishonourable use to which it was fitted? or, Why does he hold that vessel baser than the other, who made it baser? There is a fitness in the vessel for the use it was made for; and so it would be unfit to put it to another use to which it was not fitted. When the vessels are formed, it is meet and right to put each to that same use, honourable or dishonourable, for which it is formed. But while they were in the same lump of clay, the potter's pleasure, and no excellency and fitness or unfitness in the one above the other, made the difference betwixt them. And who can deny this power to the creator over his creatures, that the potter exercises over the clay?

In this manner the apostle points out to us the proper place of justice and judgment, and the proper place of that sovereignty which he had before demonstrated from God's shewing mercy to whom he will. We cannot say that distributive justice is sovereignty, nor can we expect to see it in the proper place of sovereignty. And we cannot say that sovereignty is distributive justice, or that it is to be seen in the proper place of that justice. But when we view the scheme of the divine works, as it is set before us to manifest God to us, we see them both in their proper places, and behold him both sovereign and just. And yet, if we will look only upon sovereignty, and fix our eyes abstractly upon its proper place, we shall not behold righteousness, nor ever see judgment according to works. Even as, on the other hand, if we have a mind only to look upon justice, we cannot behold mercy, nor ever see the gracious God; we shall remain ignorant of the "just God and the Saviour," besides whom there is no God.

Now, the apostle applies what he said of the potter making of the same lump one vessel to a base and another to a honourable use, unto the case of the rejected Jews, and of the called remnant of the Jews, and likewise of the Gentiles. And he says, verse. 22. 23. 24. "What if God, "willing to shew wrath, and to make his power known, "endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath "fitted to destruction: and that he might make known "the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he

" afore prepared unto glory; even us whom he called, not " of the Jews only, but alſo of the Gentiles?"

Here the " veſſels of wrath" are the Jews who are accurſed from Chriſt, diſtinguiſhed from the " veſſels of " mercy," even Paul himſelf, and others, who are called, not of the Jews only, but alſo of the Gentiles. Therefore by " veſſels" in this place we cannot underſtand " nations:" for in that conſideration the Jews were but one veſſel. And the veſſels of mercy, who are here ſaid to be " called," are not nations, but a ſmall remnant, either of the Jewiſh nation, or of any other nation, every perſon of them a " choſen veſſel," as Paul, and as 2 Tim. ii. 21.

And the " calling" here mentioned, is not merely to external church-privileges, ſuch as thoſe wherein the Jews gloried againſt the Gentiles when they were accurſed from Chriſt, while theſe Gentiles were called to righteouſneſs, and attained to it, " even the righteouſneſs which is of " faith." See verſ. 25. 26. 30. This calling, unto which the ſeparation of the Jews from Chriſt is oppoſed, muſt be that ſame of which the apoſtle was ſpeaking, chap. viii. 28. 29. 30. " All things work together for good, to them that love God, " to them who are the called according to purpoſe. For " whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate conform- " ed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firſt born " among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predeſti- " nate, them he alſo called: and whom he called, them he " alſo juſtified: and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified." By this we ſee, how the veſſels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory, eternal glory with Chriſt the firſt-born among many brethren, who are conformed to him in his ſufferings, that they may be alſo glorified together, chap. viii. 16. 17. 18. And God's calling ſome of the Gentiles unto this glory, and ſo preparing them for it, while the Jews were fitted to deſtruction, is another inſtance wherein his ſovereignty appears moſt evidently. We ſee likewiſe from verſ. 31. 32. 33. how the veſſels of wrath are, on the other hand, fitted to deſtruction, by their being hardened, in going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, againſt the faith that is in Chriſt, who is a " ſtumbling-ſtone and rock of offence" to them " who ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, " whereunto alſo they were appointed," 1 Pet. ii. 7. 8. The apoſtle ſpeaks of much long-ſuffering in the caſe of fitting the veſſels of wrath to deſtruction, as if that very long-ſuffering contributed to it. And he intimates this likewiſe, in applying the words of David to the rejected Jews,

Jews, chap. xi. 9. 10. " David ſaith, Let their table be " made a ſnare, and a trap, and a ſtumbling-block, and a re- " compenſe unto them. Let their eyes be darkened, that " they may not ſee."

All this, according to the apoſtle, is of God " willing" to " ſhew" wrath, and to " make known" his power, that he might " make known" the riches of his glory. And here we muſt conſider, that no creature whatſoever can poſſibly know God as he knows himſelf; but only as he pleaſes to diſcover himſelf by ſome work of his. Nor can it be any advantage to him, to make himſelf known, who is invariably bleſſed in the infinite enjoyment of his own ſelf-ſufficient, boundleſs perfection and glory. The creatures, who are made capable of knowing him as manifeſted in his works, and of being happy in that knowledge, have the whole benefit of the manifeſtation. If then it was the will of God to carry the happineſs of any ſuch creatures as far as it could poſſibly go, by the fulleſt diſcovery of his glory that could be made in any work; then the queſtion is, If this could be done without the miſery of other creatures? or, If the riches of the divine glory can be ſhewed on the veſſels of mercy, while there is no ſuch thing in being as deſtruction, or veſſels of wrath? And the apoſtle plainly determines this queſtion. For he makes the one neceſſary to the other, even as the ſhade in the picture. He points out God ſhewing his wrath and power on the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy. Deſtruction is as far from being the end or deſign of God's work in making himſelf known, as the ſhade is from being the deſign of the painter. Therefore he ſays, chap. xi. 11. " Have they " ſtumbled that they ſhould fall? Far be it: but, through " their fall, ſalvation unto the Gentiles." Deſtruction, ſhewing divine wrath, muſt have a place, if God will ſhew the riches of his glory, and the glory of his mercy, in a work of ſalvation. And this agrees with the fact. For as God ſhewed himſelf and his mercy to Iſrael, in his work of ſaving them from the Egyptian bondage, and giving them reſt in Canaan, by plaguing and overthrowing the Egyptians, and exterminating the Canaanites; even ſo " the " Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven, in flaming " fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and " that obey not the goſpel: who ſhall be puniſhed with " everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, " and

" and from the glory of his power; when he shall come " to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them " that believe."

But we must observe, that the apostle's way of speaking here, concerning God's shewing himself, is far from leading us to think of ascribing the " fitting" of the vessels of wrath to this destruction, unto God, in the same way as we must ascribe to him the " preparation" of the vessels of mercy to glory. For he would have us to behold God there where he shews the " riches of his glory." It is in that work he gives us his character, and by that we must know what he is. If it was his will that sin should enter into the world; this was to shew his wrath against it, or the infinite opposition of his godness to it. And indeed his wrath appears against it infinitely, both in the everlasting destruction of the vessels of wrath, and in the salvation of the vessels of mercy by the blood of that person of infinite dignity, the Son of God: for he makes salvation and righteousness spring up together. But the preparation of the vessels of mercy to glory is his design. It is his own work, agreeable to his nature; his work whereby he would have us know him, and distinguish him from all others. Agreeably to this says the apostle, James i. 13.—18. " Let no " man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for " God cannot be tempted with evils, neither tempteth he " any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn " away of his own lust, and enticed. —— Do not err, my " beloved brethren. Every good and every perfect gift is " from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, " with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. OF HIS OWN WILL begat he us with the word " of truth."

When we speak of God's providence about the sins of men, against which he shews his wrath, it will be proper to have before us the sense of the first Christian church on the subject. And we have this in that prayer which is recorded, Acts iv. from vers. 24. and which obtained a notable testimony of acceptance with God. " They lift up their voice " to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God " which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all " that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David " hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people " imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, " and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord,

" and

" and againſt his Chriſt. For of a truth againſt thy holy " ſervant Jeſus, whom thou haſt anointed, both Herod and " Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of " Iſrael were gathered together, for to do whatſoever thy " hand and thy counſel determined before to be done. And " now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto " thy ſervants, that with all boldneſs they may ſpeak thy " word," &c.

This prayer is perfectly agreeable to the word of God that the apoſtles ſpake to them at their converſion, chap. ii. 23. " Him, being delivered by the determinate counſel " and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wic- " ked hands have crucified and ſlain." And chap. iii. 17. 18. 19. " Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did " it, as did alſo your rulers. But thoſe things which God " before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that " Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled. Repent ye " therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blot- " ted out."

By this we may ſee, that Paul's doctrine here is the ſame that was taught by the other apoſtles when they began to preach the goſpel at Jeruſalem, and the ſame that was confeſſed to God in the prayers of the Chriſtian church from the beginning.

But a late author, who ſays many things very well to prove the truth of the goſpel from Paul's converſion; yet labours, in a marginal note, to overthrow Paul's goſpel, by an inference he would draw from a ſingle text againſt his moſt expreſs declarations in a variety of other texts. And this is that text, 1 Cor. ix. 27. " But I keep under my body, " and bring it into ſubjection: leſt that by any means " when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a " caſt-away." From this ſame text, this author preaches to us a ſalvation that depends upon keeping under our body by the power of our reaſon, and not upon the faith of Chriſt; which though a man retain in its full ſtrength, he may yet be a caſt-away: a ſalvation that is not by grace through faith, but by our own voluntary care duly reſtraining our bodily appetites. But can it be ſaid that Paul needed converſion in order to preach this ſalvation? And if this be the goſpel intended to be proved from Paul's converſion, we may ſay there was no uſe for ſuch a proof of it; becauſe all the men who may be ſuppoſed to need this proof, were moſt firmly perſuaded of this goſpel before.

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This author is very confident, that Paul's fear, here expreſſed, leſt the luſts of his body ſhould prevent his ſalvation, cannot be made agree with the notions of abſolute predeſtination aſcribed to him by ſome; and that "this "ſingle paſſage is a full anſwer out of the mouth of St "Paul himſelf, to all the miſtakes that have been made of "his meaning in ſome obſcure expreſſions concerning "grace, election, and juſtification." The obſcurity of the apoſtle's expreſſions on theſe ſubjects, to this author, muſt lie in this, that he cannot make them agree to the doctrine he would infer from this paſſage. But if this reaſoner be here doing Paul juſtice, it can be no injuſtice to Paul for one to aſſert, that his ſaying, (Acts xxvii. 31.), "Except "theſe abide in the ſhip, ye cannot be ſaved," is an anſwer out of his own mouth to what it may be imagined he ſays, verſ. 22. "There ſhall be no loſs of life among "you, but of the ſhip." Any man that can make theſe agree, is as capable to reconcile what Paul ſays of his being a caſt-away, except he kept under his body, with his doctrine of abſolute predeſtination.

The Imputation of Sin and Righteouſneſs.

A paraphraſe, with notes, on Rom. v. 12.—21.

TEXT.

Rom. v. 12. *FOR this, likeas by one man ſin entered into the world, and, by ſin, death; even ſo death paſſed unto all men, wherein all have ſinned.*

PARAPHRASE.

To the end that a multitude of all nations of the world, without the difference made in the law of Moſes, might be ſaved from ſin and death, joying in God through their Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom they have received the reconciliation; it was ordered, that as through one man ſin entered into the world, and through that beginning of ſin death, its wages, did enter; ſo this death paſſed to all men, even as it began; the caſe being the ſame with ſin

continuing

(a) continuing on all from its beginning, so that all are no less sinners than mortals.

NOTE.

(a) "Sin continuing on all from its beginning." Whatever critics may make of the Greek phrase ἐφ' ᾧ, which I have rendered literally "wherein," nothing can be plainer from the apostle's words, than that the transgression of Adam, by which death entered, was the entrance of sin, the beginning of all the sin that is in the world; and rendered men as incapable of innocence, as the entrance of death by that sin made them of immortality. The continuance of sin has as necessary a connection with its beginning or entrance, as the continuance of death on all men has with its entrance.

Though this doctrine of the apostle agrees with the fact, yet men will be reasoning against it. They say, that the nature of sin or moral evil admits not of necessity, as death may admit of. For no action can be morally good or evil, without a free choice. And so this necessity would be inconsistent with the nature of sin.

But this is reasoning against fact. For however choice be essential to a morally evil or good action; yet as there is no choice free from all kind of necessity, so necessity securing the choice, cannot hinder any action from being morally good or evil. This may appear to us in the following instances.

God himself is necessarily good, and cannot do evil. Is his goodness therefore no goodness?

Christ, the great pattern of goodness and righteousness among men, was ordained before the world to be without spot or stain of moral evil. Is he therefore not truly good? or was his righteousness not fit therefore to be rewarded with the glorious life that he is possessed of?

The ordaining of him to save from sin and death by his dying and rising, carries in it the necessity of the entrance of sin and death to be saved from. Is sin therefore not sin?

The betraying and murdering of him was necessary, that the scripture might be fulfilled. Was it therefore not wickedly done, nor fit to be punnished?

They who are judicially hardened, and given up to their own lusts, and upon whom God sends strong delusion,

muſt do evil. Is there no fault therefore in what they do under the influence of that deluſion or energy of error?

They who are born of God cannot ſin unto death. Is this therefore unfit to diſtinguiſh them from the children of the devil?

And the ſaints in heaven cannot ſin at all. Are they therefore neither truly good nor holy?

TEXT.

Verſ. 13. *For until the law ſin was in the world: but ſin is not imputed* * *when there is no law.*

PARAPHRASE.

For the law of Moſes, that diſtinguiſhed Iſrael from all the world, was not the firſt law whereby the iniquity of the fathers was viſited on the children, was not the only law by which ſin † as well as death paſſed from one to another; becauſe all the while before that law was given, ſin, that began in the tranſgreſſion of Adam, continued poſſeſſing the world from its entrance. And men are not thus held guilty without any law or conſtitution of the lawgiver to that effect.

TEXT.

Verſ. 14. *But death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion, who is the type of him that was to come.*

PARAPHRASE.

But the death that entered through Adam's tranſgreſſion had full power in all the time from him to Moſes, and that over them who could not, as Iſrael under the law, tranſgreſs the covenant like Adam ‡, as well as over infants who did not commit ſin themſelves as he did; ſo that the law that was diſobeyed in the entrance of ſin by which death entered, was but (*a*) imitated to Iſrael in the law of Moſes, whereby the iniquity of the fathers was viſited on the children. And when we view Adam as conveying death, the wages of his ſin, to thoſe who have not ſinned like him, we may behold him the type of him that was to come

* Philem. ver. 18. 19. Rom. iv. 6.
† Acts vii. 40.——43. ‡ Hoſ. vi. 7.

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in conſequence of the entrance of ſin, and death by it, and to whoſe coming that entrance had a view.

NOTE.

(*a*) "But imitated in the law of Moſes." The viſiting of the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and fourth generation, according to that law, was but a repreſentation of the viſiting of Adam's iniquity on all generations of men in the world. The happy life in Canaan's land, which was connected with the national obedience, was but an imitation of innocent man's life and happineſs in paradiſe. And the oppoſite death, whereby the divine diſpleaſure againſt diſobedience was manifeſted in that nation, was not abſolutely the ſame that entered into the world by Adam's ſin, but was rather an uncommon and violent death, that repreſented the puniſhment of ſin: for they who enjoyed the life and happineſs promiſed to that nation in the law, yet died the death that entered by Adam's ſin.

TEXT.

Verſ. 15. *But not as the offence, ſo alſo is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jeſus Chriſt, hath abounded to many.*

PARAPHRASE.

But when we hold one man Adam, conveying death to many by his offence, to be the type of that other one man, Jeſus Chriſt, who is not naturally connected, as Adam, with the many, but freely given to them of ſupernatural divine grace, conveying eternal life to them by his obedience; we muſt think this gift of the divine grace is much more abundant than the offence, and very far exceeding it.

TEXT.

Verſ. 16. *And not as it was by one that ſinned, ſo is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto juſtification.*

PARAPHRASE.

Fore here is a remarkable differenee betwixt the two. The one condemns by one offence; but the other juſtifies, not only from that offence, but from many offences. It not only recovers from the puniſhment of that one offence, but alſo ſaves from the puniſhment of the multitude of offences that the many committed themſelves, making them liable to the pains of a ſecond death, and intitles them to life and happineſs notwithſtanding.

TEXT.

Verſ. 17. *For if by one's offence death reigned by one; much more they who get the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life * by one Jeſus Chriſt.*

PARAPHRASE.

For this juſtification muſt be greater than the condemnation, wherein through one offence death was enthroned as a king to reign by the one man: Whereas they who are made partakers of the abundant grace that gave Jeſus Chriſt to work the righteouſneſs, and who get the free grant of that righteouſneſs to intitle them to life, ſhall be exalted in that righteouſneſs to reign in a far more glorious life (*a*) than Adam loſt; as this life is the reward of the obedience of that much more glorious one Jeſus Chriſt, with whom they partake of it.

NOTE.

(*a*) "A far more glorious life than Adam loſt." The life wherewith God inſpired Adam, was not merely that common to him with other creatures that had the breath of life. But the life proper to him, in diſtinction from the brutes, was the pleaſure he took in knowing God as manifeſted to him, and the delightful ſenſe he had of his creator's favour, while he was not conſcious of any fault in himſelf to deſerve his diſpleaſure. And while he loved the Lord his God with all his heart, ſoul, and mind, and was conſcious of his favour and love who hates all iniquity, he as far excelled all the beſt qualified and moſt excellent of his ſinful race, as light excels darkneſs, or life death.

* John x. 10.

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The ſenſe of his being agreeable to his maker, and in friendſhip with him, gave a lively bliſsful reliſh to all his enjoyments in paradiſe, for which he was formed. And without this he could not be ſaid to live there as man, by the vegetative and ſenſitive lives that he lived in common with the plants and the beaſts. His friendly correſpondence with his Creator, in due ſubjection to him who made him lord of the creatures, may well be called the life of his life in paradiſe. And the loſs of this, that began to appear in the day he ſinned, by that "ſhame" and "fear" which paſſed from him to all men, is the ſting of death to man. This makes him fall diſtinguiſhed, even in death, from the plants and the beaſts. Without the delightful knowledge of the bleſſed God, man can never find himſelf truly happy. The ſenſe and conſciouſneſs of being out of favour with the living God, gives that pain which the ſpirit of a man cannot bear. And this is the ſting of that death which entered into the world by Adam's ſin. This muſt be death the wages of ſin, as it makes death the reverſe of the life that innocent man lived in paradiſe. This was in the death of Jeſus Chriſt. His "ſoul" was "exceeding ſorrowful, even to death;" and he cried, "My God, why haſt thou forſaken me? why hideſt thou thy face from me?"

The conſciouſneſs of having acted and done on e ſin, cauſes this ſenſe of the divine diſpleaſure, this hiding of his face, that can give ſo much pain to man, and that Adam began to feel when he had ſinned; and yet it is in fact ſeparable from it. We ſhall ſee this manifeſtly in theſe two oppoſite caſes. 1. When Adam was recovered to a friendly correſpondence with God, by the revelation concerning the "ſeed of the woman," he did not then find himſelf out of favour with God; and yet he was conſcious of his having ſinned. And the ſaints in heaven behold the brighteſt light of God's reconciled countenance; and being eternally happy in the joyful ſenſe of reconciling pardoning grace, they are eternally conſcious of their having ſinned. 2. Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered extremely by the hiding of his Father's face from his ſoul. The want of the light of his countenance put him in an agony, made him ſore amazed, very heavy, and exceeding ſorrowful unto death. Yet, while he was ſo very conſcious of this, he was very far from being conſcious of his having acted or done any ſin, or that the Father hid his face from him

for

for any ſin of his own doing. Yea he was juſt then acting and doing that very obedience by which the juſtification of life comes to men, and was pleading upon it for ſalvation from death.

The death that entered into the world through Adam's ſin, being the reverſe of the life he enjoyed before, is not mere returning to the duſt, (though there be no more in it to the ſeed of the woman reconciled to God by Chriſt their head), but muſt carry in it the loſs of God's favour, wherein is life. And the life that comes by Chriſt's obedience, is not merely returning from the duſt, but, as it comes by reconciliation, muſt carry in it reſtoring us to the favour of God, and a ſenſe of his love. The apoſtle ſays ſo in the context; where he tells us, That we are "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," and "ſhall "be ſaved by his life,—joying in God through our Lord "Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have now received the re-"conciliation." He does not reſtore us to the earthly life that Adam loſt to us, but to a heavenly life with himſelf "the heavenly man," with whom we are to reign in the new heavens and the new earth, and inherit all things made new. Nor does he reſtore us to the delightful knowledge of God, and ſenſe of his favour, on the ſame footing whereon innocent man enjoyed it; but, through his own obedience and righteouſneſs, making us partakers with himſelf in the light of his Father's countenance, wherewith he is made full of joy; which is a much more near and full view of the glory of the bleſſed God, and a much more abundant ſenſe of his love, than Adam was bleſſed with before he ſinned. Jeſus deſcribes the eternal life that he gives, when he ſays to his Father, John xvii. 3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee "the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt "ſent." The glory of God appearing to us in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, who is the image of God, and the brightneſs of his glory, affords us a delightful knowledge of God, far exceeding all that the diſcovery of God to innocent Adam could give him. And the ſenſe of the Father's love, wherewith the ſoul of the Son of God is filled, and made moſt bleſſed for ever through his own righteouſneſs, as far excels the ſenſe that innocent Adam had of the divine favour, as he excels him. And this is what he imparts to them to whom he gives eternal life; as he ſays, John xvii. 26. "I have declared unto them thy name, and will de-

"clare

" clare that the love wherewith thou haſt loved me may " be in them."

But if the life we have by Chriſt were no more but a reſurrection common to the ſaved and damned, it would not then reverſe the death we have by Adam. And if the abundance of the grace and gift of righteouſneſs be no more but the richeſt proviſion of ſuch means as we may or may not improve, and ſo be damned notwithſtanding; then the free gift is far from being ſo abundant as the offence. For by the offence death reigned: but, according to this doctrine, the free gift does not ſecure their reigning in life on whom it is beſtowed; becauſe they may riſe to damnation for all that abundance of the gift; whereas the offence made death reign over them who had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion.

TEXT.

Verſ. 18. *Now therefore, as by one offence, to all men, to condemnation; ſo alſo by one righteouſneſs, to all men, to juſtification of life.*

PARAPHRASE.

This being the difference of the judgment to condemnation, and the free gift to juſtification, it now remains, in conſequence of what is before ſaid, that the one anſwers to the other as its type, and agrees exactly with it in this reſpect, That in like manner as the judgment is unto all men (*a*), without the difference made by the law, making them partakers in the condemnation for one offence; even ſo the free gift is to all men, without regard to the peculiarity of the law, making them alſo partakers in being intitled to that glorious reign in life for one righteouſneſs.

NOTE.

(*a*) " Unto all men." The " all men" who are here ſaid to be condemned, are the ſame with the " all men" who are ſaid to be juſtified to life, who ſhall reign in life. So that this univerſal way of ſpeaking ſtands here in oppoſition to the Jewiſh limitation; as it does frequently in the New Teſtament, declaring, in oppoſition to that limitation, the accompliſhment of that promiſe to Abraham, " In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed;" and as when it is ſaid, the goſpel was " preached to eve-

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" ry creature under heaven." For the " all men" here, who are as well partakers of the juſtification of life as of the condemnation of death, are no other than the " many," verſ. 15. who are both made ſinners by one man's diſobedience, and made righteous by one's obedience, verſ. 19. Now, the " many" who are made righteous by Chriſt's obedience, muſt be the very ſame of whom we read, Rev. vii. 9. 10. " I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which " no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and " people, and tongues, ſtood before the throne, and be- " fore the Lamb,—and cried,—ſaying, Salvation to our " God,—and unto the Lamb." Theſe are the " many :" and we may ſee from theſe words how they may well be called " all men," though it appears they are not all of mankind. Theſe were all loſt, and are all ſaved. And they are diſtinguiſhed to us, in the ſtate of ſalvation, by their aſcribing the whole of their ſalvation only to their God, and to the Lamb who redeemed them to God by his blood, " out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, " and nation," Rev. v. 9. who redeemed them " from a- " mong men," Rev. xiv. 4. For they are " all made " alive in Chriſt," as they " all died in Adam ;" they themſelves contributing no more to the one than they did to the other.

As for thoſe of mankind, from among whom theſe are redeemed, who cannot be ſaid to be in Chriſt, to be made righteous, or juſtified to life by his obedience, and to whom belongs the reſurrection of damnation, they can have no place in this diſcourſe of the apoſtle, that ſets the reſurrection of life overagainſt the death that came by Adam's ſin, and ſpeaks of them that partake as well of the one as the other, or of them upon whom the eternal life comes in like manner as the death came.

And ſo this paſſage agrees with that parallel text, 1 Cor. xv. 21. 22. " As in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be " made alive." For though it be fact that all of mankind became mortal by Adam's ſin, and that every individual of the race dies; yet the text ſays no ſuch thing. It affirms indeed, that " all that are Chriſt's" die in Adam: but in the whole paſſage there is not any inſinuation of the dying and riſing again of any one but theſe " that are " Chriſt's, who ſhall be " raiſed in glory," and " bear the " image of the heavenly man," and " inherit the king- " dom of God." The apoſtle ſays theſe all die in Adam, and

and even so they are all made alive in Christ. But he speaks not there of the dying and living again of any other; neither does he in this passage.

TEXT.

Vers. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be constituted righteous.*

PARAPHRASE.

For, as many were included in the sentence of death passed upon one man for his disobedience, and so died with him on account of his disobedience, and not on account of their own personal sins; even so many shall be included in the sentence adjudging that one, who was to come, unto eternal life from the dead, as the reward of his obedience; and they shall live with him on account of his obedience, and not on account of their own personal righteousness.

TEXT.

Vers. 20. *Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*

PARAPHRASE.

Now, the foresaid law of Moses came in to represent the law that was transgressed by Adam; and, by condemning men for every transgression and disobedience, and even for offence not done by themselves, served to shew the abundance of the offence in condemning, and causing death. But where the abundance of the offence appeared, there the superabundance of justifying grace shewed itself in the gift of that one by whose obedience the many are made righteous; for he came under that same law.

TEXT.

Vers. 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

PARAPHRASE.

That as ſin had been enthroned to exerciſe an uncontrolable power in cauſing death, ſo juſtifying grace might be enthroned powerfully and irreſiſtibly to recover from that death unto eternal life, as the reward of that righteouſneſs wrought for us by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

A Deſcription of juſtifying Faith.

ROM. iv. 12.

Who — walk in the ſteps of that faith of our Father Abraham.

GOD, who condemned all men to death for one tranſgreſſion of his law, will never juſtify any man by what he can work in obedience to a law which he in any point tranſgreſſes. And we may find this in the action of our conſcience upon any one ſin.

The apoſtle having ſhewed both Jews and Gentiles to be all under ſin, and therefore incapable to be juſtified by what they can work, declares that God manifeſts his juſtice, as well as his grace, in juſtifying ſinners by what they believe him teſtifying concerning Jeſus Chriſt: even as he juſtified Abraham, not by what he wrought, but by what he believed; as the ſcripture ſaith, "Abraham believed God, "and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs," verſ. 2. 3.

There are two ſenſes of "juſtifying" in ſcripture. 1. It ſignifies the making of one juſt or righteous who is unjuſt, as verſ. 5. — "that juſtifieth the ungodly." See chap. v. 19 and 2 Cor. v. 21. 2. It ſignifies the declaring of one juſt who is already juſt; as when God is ſaid to be juſtified, chap. iii. 4.; and as when Paul ſays of himſelf, 1 Cor. iv. 4. "I "know nothing by myſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified: "but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

We have an inſtance of both theſe juſtifications in Abraham the father of the faithful. He was declared to be juſt, and ſo juſtified, when he offered up Iſaac; as the apoſtle James ſays, againſt thoſe who would be declared juſt by their believing, without theſe works which are the neceſſary fruits and evidences of true belief. James ii. 20.—23. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without

"works

" works is dead? Was not Abraham our father juſtified by " works, when he had offered Iſaac his ſon upon the altar? " Seeſt thou how faith wrought with his works, and by " works was faith made perfect? And the ſcripture was ful- " filled which ſaith, Abraham believed God, and it was im- " puted unto him for righteouſneſs: and he was called " the friend of God. Ye ſee then how that by works a " man is juſtified, and not by faith only." Thus we ſee, that a man who is juſtified or made juſt by faith, is juſtified or declared juſt by his works wherewith his faith works, and not by his believing without theſe works. For this juſtification of Abraham, by faith working with his works, was long after his juſtification by faith, or by what he believed, without works, long after the time of which the ſcripture ſaith, he " believed God, and it was imputed to him for " righteouſneſs." So that his juſtification by his works with which his faith wrought, was the declaration of his being already juſt by his faith, or by what he believed. And by this he was called the friend of God, who had been long before made his friend. For James ſays, that, in this laſt juſtification, " the ſcripture was fulfilled, which ſaith, Abra- " ham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righ- " teouſneſs: and he was called the friend of God." So it was the declaration of the firſt.

The apoſtle Paul, upon the queſtion, Whether a ſinner be made juſt by what he works, or by what he believes? oppoſing them who would be made juſt by their works, or become the friends of God by what they work, ſpeaks in this paſſage of that firſt juſtification of Abraham by faith, before his circumciſion, and before faith wrought with his work of offering his ſon to declare him juſt, when he became not juſt by what he wrought, but by what he believed. And ſo he ſays, verſ. 2.—6. " For if Abraham were " juſtified by works, he hath to glory, but not before God. " For what ſaith the ſcripture? Abraham believed God, " and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs. Now to him " that worketh, is the reward reckoned, not of grace, but " of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on " him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for " righteouſneſs: even as David alſo deſcribeth the bleſſed- " neſs of the man unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs " without works."

There was a righteouſneſs in Abraham's faith, which was imputed to him. And that ſame righteouſneſs is imputed

to ſinners, both Jews and Gentiles, not working, but believing the ſame thing that Abraham before believed. For the apoſtle ſays, verſ. 22.—25. —— "It was imputed to "him for righteouſneſs. Now it was not written for his "ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo, "to whom it ſhall be imputed, believing on him that rai-"ſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered "for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification." There is a righteouſneſs revealed in the word of God which we believe. This righteouſneſs was before ſet forth to Abraham in God's word of promiſe to him; and it is now ſet before us in the goſpel, as already wrought by that ſeed of Abraham whom God had raiſed up from the dead, even Jeſus Chriſt, delivered for the offences of ſinners of all nations without difference, and raiſed again for their juſtification. That this ſame righteouſneſs was promiſed to Abraham, is manifeſt from the apoſtle's explication of that promiſe, which he believed, Gal. iii. 8.——14. "And the ſcripture "foreſeeing that God would juſtify the heathen through "faith, preached before the goſpel unto Abraham, In thee "ſhall all nations be bleſſed. So then they which be of "faith, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham. For as many "as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe.— "Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being "made a curſe for us,—that the bleſſing of Abraham "might come on the nations through Jeſus Chriſt."

But though the righteouſneſs contained in the promiſe that Abraham believed, be the very ſame that is now declared to have been wrought by Chriſt his ſeed, who is raiſed from the dead; and though it be imputed to us believing, even as it was to him believing: yet there was ſomething in the matter of his faith different from ours. For he was called to believe, when he had no hope of being a father, that he in whom all nations ſhould be bleſſed would be of his ſeed; ſo that he, who was going childleſs, ſhould be the father of many nations. God ſaid to him, Gen. xv. 4. 5. 6. "He that ſhall come forth out of thine own bowels, ſhall "be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and "ſaid, Look now toward heaven, and tell the ſtars, if "thou be able to number them: and he ſaid unto him, So "ſhall thy ſeed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he "counted it to him for righteouſneſs." Now the apoſtle makes this in Abraham's faith, which is different from ours, the example or pattern to our believing on him who raiſed up

Jeſus

Jesus our Lord from the dead. And so he gives us a lively description of justifying faith, by pointing out the steps of Abraham's believing in him who quickeneth the dead, to become the father of many nations; and by shewing us, that we walk in the steps of that faith, when we believe in him that raised up Christ from the dead, to become righteous, or to be justified.

And these are the steps of Abraham's faith that he points out to be walked in by us believing unto righteousness.

1. He believed to become a father, "according to that "which was spoken," verse. 18. He had no ground for his persuasion, but the word of God; and as God spake, so he believed. Even so we, in believing to be justified, are no more going upon our own experience and reasonings than did Abraham; but we are hearkening to the gospel setting forth the resurrection of Christ, that great fact wherein God shews the truth of his testimony concerning his beloved Son in whom he is well pleased; and we are giving credit to him who shews himself as God in that testimony; and as God says, so we believe.

It is the business of faith to hear God's voice in revelation; and justifying faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. God revealed himself in divers manners to the fathers, especially by a voice, which they that heard knew to be the voice of God; as Adam hearing the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, and Elijah hearing the still small voice. Revelation is now perfected in the scriptures of the apostles and prophets. We can no more now hear any new revelation, nor such a voice as they heard of old. The word of the Lord comes not to us in a vision, speaking to us as to Abraham; but we hear God speaking to us in the scriptures; and as many as believe, hear the voice that raises the dead, (John, chap. 5.), and know that it is the word of the Lord. We were made capable (in distinction from the brutes) of corresponding with God in this way. And we see this correspondence betwixt God and man both before and after the fall. Yea, notwithstanding our disobedience to God's word, we have still his voice in our conscience: for, however we reason against it, we know the judgment of God by the testimony of our conscience. And by this we are capable of revelation, and of divine teaching thereby. We may have received the scriptures by tradition; we may have reasoned ourselves into an opinion that God is the author of them: but have we heard God speaking in them?

them? as the apoſtle ſays to Chriſtians, " If ſo be ye have " heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is " in Jeſus;" and as Jeſus ſaid, " Every man that hath heard " and learned of the Father, cometh to me." When God propoſes to make us live, not by our own labour, but by what he tells us, Iſ. lv. 2. 3. he ſays, " Hear, and your ſoul " ſhall live." The dead in treſpaſſes and ſins hear the voice of God, and live, even as the dead in their graves ſhall hear it, and come forth, John v. 24. 25. 28 29. We do not reaſon ourſelves into faith; but the goſpel of the apoſtles comes to us, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance; and we hear God ſpeaking in the ſcriptures, as Abraham heard him ſpeaking to him by the voice, and as the dead ſhall hear his voice: and we give the ſame credit to God as Abraham did.

2. Abraham, in believing to become a father, according to that which was ſpoken, reſpected God, not as concurring with nature, but as working beyond the courſe of nature altogether. " He believed God who quickeneth the " dead, and calleth thoſe things which be not, as though " they were," verſ. 17. If he had become a father in the natural way, his body not having been yet dead, even that could not have been without God, in whom he lived, and moved, and had his being; and he was to be reſpected in it as the author of nature, and as directing and influencing its whole courſe. But when God ſaid to him, who, according to nature, behoved to go childleſs, " So ſhall thy ſeed " be," he could not believe this without reſpecting God as reverſing the courſe of nature, likeas in raiſing the dead. He looked on the ſaying of God which he believed, as on his calling the world out of nothing; or as his ſaying to the darkneſs, " Let it be light, and it was light."

And he that works righteouſneſs, and is not guilty, may look to God for juſtification in the natural way, as one that knows himſelf fit for being accounted righteous. But a ſinner, not working, but believing on God as juſtifying the ungodly, muſt reſpect him, in believing, as acting quite beyond the courſe of nature, even as raiſing the dead, and calling thoſe things that be not as though they were. Philoſophy, that follows the courſe of nature, and traces the connection of things in that courſe, muſt utterly fail a man here. He goes out of its ſphere the moment he believes on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead, for our juſtification. As nature is reverſed in that reſurrection, to

believe

believe to be juſtified through that, is to look to God for juſtification out of the way of nature altogether. And as the life we are intitled to in that juſtification is a ſupernatural life with Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, no wonder if our believing to be thus juſtified be declared the effect of the operation of God who raiſed him. Nor need we wonder, if the works wherewith this faith works, and whereby it ſhews itſelf, be beyond the ſphere of what we call moral virtue.

3. Abraham believed "in hope againſt hope" to become the father of many nations, according to that which was ſpoken, verſ. 18. He could find nothing about himſelf whereupon to found his hope of becoming a father: but, on the contrary, he ſaw every thing oppoſite to ſuch a hope, and ſerving to make him deſperate about it; as "his body "now dead, and the deadneſs of Sarah's womb." Yet, in believing that which was ſpoken, he had the moſt ſufficient ground for his hope. The word that God ſpake gave him confidence, in hoping to become the father of many nations, againſt all that he ſaw otherwiſe oppoſite to that hope.

In like manner, the ſinner that works not, but believes on him that juſtifies the ungodly, even him that raiſed Chriſt from the dead, finds nothing about himſelf that can encourage him to expect juſtification, but every thing ſerving to lead him to deſpair. If juſtifying grace were diſpenſed according to any fitneſs whereby one man may be differenced from another as better qualified for it; he could find no ſuch fitneſs, no ſuch qualification in him to encourage him to look for that grace, but rather the contrary; as Paul ſays of himſelf, "Chriſt came to ſave ſinners, of "whom I am chief." If his acceptance with God ſhould go upon any terms which he muſt fulfil, he finds himſelf as much without ſtrength to fulfil them, (and eſpecially that of "ſincerity," Jer. xvii. 9.), as Abraham found himſelf for becoming a father when his body was now dead. In a word, he views himſelf in that ſame point of light wherein the divine mercy held men in ſending the Son of God to die for them, and wherein his death reſpected them, *i. e.* as "ſin-"ners," and "enemies to God;" as "ungodly," and "without ſtrength," chap. v. 6. 8. 10. and ſo he works not to make himſelf righteous, but, ſeeing all his works againſt the hope of his juſtification, prays, as the publican, "Be "propitious to me, a ſinner." For, in believing or giving credit to the teſtimony of the goſpel concerning the reſurrection of the Son of God, who, when we were yet without ſtrength,

ſtrength, in due time died for the ungodly, and roſe again for their juſtification, he finds good ground for the hope of being juſtified by that revealed righteouſneſs which is unto all and upon all that believe, without difference. He ſees good ground to hope for the "bleſſedneſs of the man to whom "God imputeth righteouſneſs without works." So his hope of being juſtified is againſt his feeling and experience; but it is according to his faith. For there is a glorious ground of hope in that which he believes. And ſo he walks in this ſtep of Abraham's faith, "believing in hope againſt hope."

4. There was ſuch a certainty in Abraham's faith, ſuch a firm perſuaſion of that which was ſpoken, that no objection could ſtand in his mind againſt the truth of it, and no room was left there for a thought of the poſſibility of its being falſe. He behoved to be very certain, that what was ſpoken was the word of God, and ſo aſſent to it as his teſtimony, for whom it is impoſſible to lie: for he believed God; he gave credit to him, who calleth thoſe things which be not as though they were. And ſuch was his confidence in the word of God, that the conſideration of "his own body "now dead, when he was about an hundred years old," and of "the deadneſs of Sarah's womb," was not able to ſhake it. His faith did not admit this to conſideration as an objection againſt the word of God. So he "ſtaggered not at the pro-"miſe of God through unbelief, —— being fully perſuaded, "that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform," verſ. 19. 20. 21.

And ſuch a certainty there is in the faith of Abraham's children believing on him that juſtifieth the ungodly; as we may ſee from ſuch texts as theſe. Luke i. 1. — "Which "are moſt ſurely believed among us." John vi. 69. "We "believe, and are ſure." John xvii. 8. "I have given to "them the words which thou gaveſt me; and they have re-"ceived them, and have known ſurely that I came out from "thee, and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me." Heb. xi. 1. "Faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the "evidence of things not ſeen." Heb. iii. 14. "We are "made partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the beginning of "our confidence ſtedfaſt unto the end." 1 Theſſ. i. 5. "Our goſpel — came unto you — in much aſſurance." 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. "Ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is "in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo "in you that believe." 1 John v. 9. 10. "If we receive "the witneſs of men, the witneſs of God is greater. ——

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glorified him as God who raiſes the dead, and calls thoſe things that be not as though they were.

Even ſo, when we work not to make ourſelves juſt, but believe on him that raiſed Jeſus for the juſtification of the ungodly, we give him the whole glory of our juſtification, as not pretending to contribute any thing toward it ourſelves, but acknowledging him who diſtinguiſhes himſelf as God, and manifeſts his glory in this juſtification.

A ſinner that ſtudies to be made fitter than another for being juſtified, cannot be believing the ſufficiency of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to juſtify him, nor glorifying God who juſtifies the ungodly by that righteouſneſs. He that would work to make himſelf righteous, muſt ſuppoſe to himſelf a God that will not puniſh every tranſgreſſion, nor curſe every one that continues not in all things commanded. He muſt ſuppoſe to himſelf a God that will juſtify by an imperfect righteouſneſs; and ſo loves not righteouſneſs nor hates iniquity as God, but as he would pretend to do himſelf. But he that believes on him who raiſed Jeſus from the dead for the juſtification of ſinners, reſpects him as God, ſhewing the infinite oppoſition of his goodneſs unto all iniquity in the death of Chriſt delivered for the offences of ſinners, and ſhewing his love to righteouſneſs, as juſtifying by a perfect righteouſneſs, in raiſing him from the dead; even that righteouſneſs which the Son of God finiſhed on the croſs: and ſo not being ignorant of the juſtice of God, he goes not about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſs, but glorifies the name of the righteous Father, whom the world knew not, as that name is manifeſted by Jeſus Chriſt.

Again, The ſinner that works to make himſelf juſt, muſt ſuppoſe to himſelf a God that has no mercy to ſhew to the worthleſs and miſerable, (the only proper objects of mercy), nor any grace to manifeſt but unto thoſe who differ from others by ſome excelling qualification. He muſt ſuppoſe to himſelf a God who cannot ſhew mercy to whom he will, but according to thoſe differences whereby ſinners may glory over one another, ſaying, as the Phariſee, "God, I thank "thee I am not as other men, or as this publican." But he that believes on him who raiſed Chriſt for the juſtification of ſinners, acknowledges the glory of the divine mercy and grace ſending the Son of God, ſubſtituting him in the room of the ungodly to whom God would ſhew mercy, delivering him for their offences, and raiſing him for their juſtification, without reſpect to any difference wherein one man can find

himself excelled by another. This is to shew mercy like God. Justification is by faith, that it might be by this grace. And he that works not, but believes to be justified by grace freely through the redemption that is in Christ's blood, gives God the glory of his mercy, saying, as the publican, "God "be propitious to me, a sinner." And the stronger he is in this faith, the more he glorifies God as did Abraham.

Thus we have seen the steps of Abraham's faith wherein they walk who believe in Christ for righteousness. And we may be encouraged to walk in them by these words of the prophet, Is. li. 1. 2. 3. "Hearken to me, ye that follow "after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the "rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit "whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, "and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, "and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord will "comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places, and "he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like "the garden of the Lord."

The EFFECTS of FAITH.

2 COR. iv. 13.

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak.

THE apostle here refers to what the Psalmist said in the name of Christ, Psal. cxvi. 10. "I believed, "therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted." And he shews us, that as Jesus believed, and therefore spake when he was persecuted to death for the truth; even so his apostles, suffering for that same truth which they also preached, were preserved from despair, and encouraged to hope like him by the same spirit of faith that was in him. For he says, vers. 14. "Knowing that he which raised up "the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall "present us with you."

But this spirit of faith is none of those things that were peculiar to the apostles: for Peter speaks thus to all true Christians, 2 Pet. i. 1. "To them that have obtained like "precious faith with us." Even as Paul says to the Philippians

lippians, "Let your converſation be as it becometh the "goſpel. — Stand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtri- "ving together for the faith of the goſpel; and in no- "thing terrified by your adverſaries: which is to them an "evident token of perdition, but to you of ſalvation, "and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf "of Chriſt, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuf- "fer for his ſake; having the ſame conflict which he ſaw "in me, and now hear to be in me," Phil. i. 27.—30. And Jeſus prayed the Father, not for his apoſtles only, (John xvii. 20. 21.), "but for all that ſhall believe on "me through their word, that they all may be one," *i. e.* in the truth, having the ſame ſpirit of faith. They have it not all in the ſame meaſure. And none of them has it in that perfection wherein Jeſus had it: for in all his followers the fleſh luſts againſt the ſpirit of faith. But they all have it, and are all fitted by it to follow him the author and finiſher of their faith, though none of them come fully up to the perfection of the pattern.

The Holy Ghoſt, by whoſe power Jeſus was conceived holy in the Virgin's womb, dwelt in him as the ſpirit of faith forming him into a temper and diſpoſition ſuitable to the faith wherein he grew up from his infancy. And this is the Spirit of Chriſt, which if any man have not, he is none of his. Yea, no man can make a right profeſſion of the faith, but by the Holy Ghoſt.

The truth that Jeſus believed is the ſame that all his followers believe unto righteouſneſs, and confeſs unto ſalvation, even this truth that he heard from the Father at his baptiſm, *viz.* "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM "I AM WELL PLEASED." This is the truth imported and demonſtrated in his reſurrection from the dead; this is the great ſcope of all ſcripture-revelation: and this is the word that he gave his diſciples, to diſtingtiſh them from the world, that hated them for it; praying his Father, that they might be ſanctified through this truth. He believed it, and therefore ſpake it: ſo do they, having the ſame ſpirit of faith.

The Son of God was from eternity perfectly conſcious of his being the ſame God with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, and of his being a diſtinct perſon from them in the ſame Godhead, the perſon to be ſent forth, made of a woman, made under the law, to fulfil it for ſinners, and recon-

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cile them to God by his death, as a ſacrifice well pleaſing to the Father. And ſo he had no need to be told that he is the beloved Son of God in whom he is well pleaſed; he could not have any occaſion for this revelation, nor any uſe for the faith of it. But when he became man, he then knew this truth in his human ſoul, the ſame way that we alſo know it, by the ſame ſpirit of faith, opening his ear to hear the word of God, and making him give credit to the divine teſtimony in revelation. As he grew in wiſdom, he grew up from a child in the knowledge of this truth, by means of the Old-teſtament ſcriptures, and the revelation to his mother concerning him before his conception. See Luke ii. 46. 47. 48. 49. When he came to the baptiſm of John, undertaking "to fulfil all righteouſneſs" for his people, he therein profeſſed the faith of his being that perſon by whom God ſhould be reconciled to men, even the Son of God, made under the law, to fulfil it for ſinners. And he was confirmed in this faith, by the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon him, and by the Father's voice from heaven teſtifying the ſame thing that he believed from his infancy.

John Baptiſt, who ſaw and heard this, teſtified of Jeſus as the Son of God, who, coming from heaven, is above all that ever were ſent of God to ſpeak to men, and as the only proper object of the Father's love. And he alſo teſtified of the Father's being well pleaſed in him, whom he heard undertaking to fulfil all righteouſneſs for his people; for he ſaid, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away "the ſin of the world." And he foretold, that this his teſtimony of him would be fully proved by his baptizing with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire; as we ſee he did on the day of Pentecoſt.

Jeſus, after this confirmation of his faith at John's baptiſm, and after the trial of it by the temptation of Satan, which he overcame by the word of God, confeſſed and preached this truth which he believed. He ſhewed himſelf to Iſrael, as the beloved Son of God, by the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, by the teſtimony of John, by the divine works that he wrought among them, and by the Father's voice from heaven: and, condemning their righteouſneſs wherein they gloried, he declared to them, that he was come to fulfil the law; that he did always thoſe things that pleaſed the Father; and that he came down from heaven to give his fleſh and blood for the life of the world. When he was perſecuted by the Jews for this truth that he believed

believed and ſpake, he perſevered in the belief and confeſſion of it to the death, laying down his life upon it. And, even under the hiding of his Father's face from his ſoul, he confeſſed it to the Father, ſaying, "O my Father, if "this cup may not paſs away from me except I drink it, "thy will be done;" and, "Father, into thy hands I "commend my ſpirit." The Holy Ghoſt dwelling in him as the ſpirit of faith, ſuſtained him in his agony, when through that eternal Spirit he offered himſelf without ſpot a ſacrifice to pleaſe the Father. The obedience he then learned from the things that he ſuffered, even the perfect ſubmiſſion and ſubjection to the will of the Father in drinking that cup, was the effect of his believing himſelf to be the Father's beloved Son, in whom he is well pleaſed. And by this faith, and not by any ſenſe or feeling of the Father's love, was his ſoul kept from deſpair in his agony, and encouraged, when exceeding ſorrowful unto death, to hope for the reſurrection of eternal life to himſelf, and to all his people.

We may therefore look on this faith as the principle of his obedience to the death, by which we believe to be juſtified, and to which this belief muſt conform us. And we cannot rightly think of him as our pattern, without thinking of this ſpring of his conduct; nor can we walk as he walked, if we have not the ſame ſpirit of faith that formed his character, and conducted him in his life and death. If then we would know what muſt be the effects of the faith in us, we may look to the effects of it in our pattern, the author and finiſher of our faith. And to this purpoſe let us obſerve the following inſtances.

1. The ſpirit of faith influenced him to profeſs the truth that he believed, though the profeſſion of it expoſed him to the hatred and contempt of the world, and of the beſt eſteemed in the world; though it made him a ſcorn to his enemies, and a fear to his friends, even when left alone to confeſs it in the certain proſpect of death for it: "I "believed, therefore have I ſpoken; I was greatly afflict-"ed." The ſame appeared in the apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians having the ſame ſpirit of faith. And we ſee how the profeſſion of the faith is inſiſted on every where in the New Teſtament, and connected with ſalvation: "With the heart "man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth "confeſſion is made to ſalvation."

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The truth that Jesus and his apostles believed and spake, is signified to us in all the ordinances of the New Testament. And we confess it in the observation of these according to the institution; as we may see from Heb. x. 22.——25. It is true, men observe these ordinances wherein the faith is professed without the spirit of faith, when they go about, by them, to establish their own righteousness against Christ, whose righteousness is signified in them, as that which pleases God; even as the Jews did by the ordinances of worship in the Old Testament But if any would seem to be spiritual, in shewing neglect to any of those institutions wherein the truth is signified to us, and professed by us, we may say the spirit that conducts them in this is not the spirit of faith.

2. The spirit of faith made Jesus a despiser of tradition, with all the doctrines and commandments of men in religion, and at the same time a reverencer of divine revelation, to which he shewed the greatest respect and subjection, in the scriptures of the prophets, and in the ministry of John Baptist. For divine faith depends wholly on divine revelation. Faith hears nothing but God's word; and it hearkens to all that he says, with a respect due to the authority of the speaker; therefore it is the character of Jesus, and of all his followers in the faith, that they "tremble at God's word," Is. lxvi. 2. 5.

The spirit of faith led Jesus, who shewed neglect to usages that had no foundation but in tradition, into the diligent observation of every divine precept. He observed the precepts of Moses, carefully keeping the passover before he suffered. And he came all the way from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John. The same spirit of faith appeared in all his first followers, both Jews and Gentiles, keeping the ordinances of the gospel as the apostles delivered them, who received them from the Lord. We see how readily they submitted to baptism as soon as they believed, and how they assembled on the first day of the week to break bread. The churches, after the first church in Jerusalem, continued stedfastly in the doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers, praising God. For when the Gentiles received the word of the apostles as the word of God, and it wrought effectually in them, it made them followers of the churches of God which in Judea were in Christ Jesus. And the forsaking of the assembling together for the observation of the ordinances, is placed as an evidence of

apostasy

apoſtaſy from the faith. The believing Jews ſtill obſerved the precepts of Moſes, till their conſciences were looſed from the obligation of them by revelation; while the believing Gentiles did not obſerve theſe precepts, becauſe they had divine revelation for their not obſerving them. So both Jews and Gentiles, as well in the things wherein they yet differed, as in the things to which they had already attained, and were agreed in, ſhewed ſubjection to the divine authority in revelation, trembling at God's word, as Jeſus did before them. And upon this footing they were called to forbear one another in love, as to the things wherein they differed, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But an unity among Chriſtians, that ſtands by diſpenſing with the neglect of any truth or precept of revelation, and by indulging a regard to the doctrines and commandments of men, cannot be called the unity of the faith. A friendſhip that is cultivated by forbearing one another, in diſregarding any commandment of God, and in the keeping of human tradition, cannot be friendſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, who ſays, "Ye are my friends, "if ye do whatſoever I command you;" and, "If a man "love me, he will keep my words;" and, "He that loveth "me not, keepeth not my ſayings." For "he that ſaith "he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even "as he walked."

3. The ſpirit of faith made Jeſus a lover of the truth which he believed, and a hater of every thing oppoſite to that truth. "Faith worketh by charity or love;" and it wrought in Jeſus by that "charity" which "rejoiceth not "in unrighteouſneſs, but rejoiceth with the truth." He loved the Father's name, manifeſted in that truth as infinitely "juſt" and "merciful." And he loved them that were of that truth, "for the truth's ſake," which he gave them, and they received. Therefore he ſaid to his Father, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; "but I have known thee, and theſe have known that thou "haſt ſent me. And I have declared to them thy name, "and will declare, that the love wherewith thou haſt "loved me, may be in them, and I in them." While he delighted in them that were of the truth, he conſidered them as oppoſite to the world, that hated them for the ſake of the truth that they received from him; and he loved them becauſe they were not of the world: for he took no pleaſure in worldly men. He conſidered the beſt eſteemed

among them (who were the moſt ſelf-righteous) as the greateſt haters of the divine name, enemies both to the mercy and juſtice of God manifeſted in the truth that he heard from the Father; and he looked on them with anger and grief. Yea, he was alſo diſpleaſed with his diſciples when at any time they ſhewed a temper oppoſite to the truth that they believed. He conſidered the beſt of the unbelieving Jews who oppoſed that truth as the children of the devil; and he aſcribed any oppoſition to it that he found in his diſciples, to the influence of Satan upon them. Such was his charity.

His commandment to his followers in the faith is, That they love one another, even as he loved them; and they were diſtinguiſhed from the beginning by their obedience to this command. The ſcriptures of the apoſtles are full of exhortations to it, as the native fruit and proper evidence of unfeigned faith. And they every where direct Chriſtians in the outward expreſſions and practice of that love, which is their obedience to the goſpel. For the followers of Jeſus love one another, not in word and in tongue, but in work and in truth, as he did.

But as Jeſus believed, that he was to reconcile enemies to God, and ſo gave his life for them a ſacrifice well pleaſing to the Father; his charity, the fruit of this faith, wrought alſo in the way of benevolence or good-will to thoſe whom he looked on as his enemies for the ſake of the truth, and who perſecuted him to death for it in their ignorance and unbelief. So he prayed, "Father, forgive "them, for they know not what they do." And he requires the ſame good-will to enemies in his followers; commanding them to love their enemies, to bleſs them, to pray for them, and to do them good.

Jeſus is a pattern to his followers in the faith, not only in doing good eſpecially to the houſehold of faith, as to whom charity rejoices with the truth, but alſo in doing good to all men, toward whom it works in the way of grace and good-will. His whole obedience to the death was a work of grace and mercy to miſerable ſinners, to the worthleſs and wretched; for the end of it was to reconcile them to God. He went about always doing good, relieving the diſtreſſed. And though he himſelf was ſupported by the liberality of thoſe that miniſtered to him of their ſubſtance; yet we ſee his little bag, that was ſometimes empty, was open to the poor. His doctrine of almſgiving, againſt co-

vetouſneſs,

vetouſneſs, was ridiculed by the Phariſees, who gave much alms. And the good works that are required throughout the New Teſtament, as the fruits and evidences of faith, are works of mercy and almſdeeds, to be done to all men, but eſpecially to the houſehold of faith.

The charity of Jeſus, or his love to the truth that he believed and ſpake when he was greatly afflicted, ſhewed itſelf alſo in enduring all that affliction for the ſake of that truth. And ſo he is the pattern of the charity that "endureth all things." The Chriſtian zeal is the fervency of the Chriſtian charity; and as that zeal is the zeal of good works, ſo it likewiſe appears in reſiſting unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin, after his example, who endured the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, and endured the croſs. The Jews had a "zeal of God" that moved them to perſecute him for the truth; but, in oppoſition to theſe children of the devil, his zeal ſhewed itſelf in ſuffering for the truth. In like manner, his firſt followers counted all things loſs for the excellency of the truth, and ſuffered the loſs of all things for it. And we ſee from this ſame paſſage, that the apoſtles looked on the truth, which they alſo believed and ſpake, as a precious "treaſure" in their poſſeſſion, for the ſake of which they loved not their lives to the death.

Now, this is that charity, or love of the truth, that is oppoſite to the love of the world, and to all its luſts, and can dwell only in a heart purified by faith. This is that great effect of the faith, in Jeſus, and in all thoſe that have the ſame ſpirit of faith. Others may talk of this Chriſtian virtue; but they can know nothing about it.

4. The ſpirit of faith in Jeſus, was the ſpring of that "ſincerity and truth" in him, in whoſe mouth guile was not to be found. There was a perfect agreement betwixt the belief of his heart and the confeſſion of his mouth. He believed, and therefore he ſpake; not as the Phariſees, drawing near to God with the mouth, inſtantly worſhipping day and night by ſacrifice in the profeſſion of the hope of the promiſe of Chriſt made to the fathers, while their hearts were far removed from him in the way of ſelf-righteouſneſs. And theſe are followed by men profeſſing with the mouth in the Chriſtian worſhip, that God is well pleaſed in his beloved Son; and, under this ſame profeſſion, going about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own, and to reconcile themſelves to God another way. Thus their

profeſſion of the faith is a lie: And for this antichriſt is called a liar. In oppoſition to his followers, it is ſaid of the followers of the Lamb, whoſe blood makes them without fault before the throne, That "in their mouth was "found no guile." Agreeably to this ſays the Pſalmiſt, "Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not "iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit no guile." And he gives this character of an inhabitant of God's houſe, That he "ſpeaketh the truth in his heart." The truth that Jeſus believed and ſpake, is the ſpring of all the real ſincerity that is to be found in the hearts of men. The apoſtles preached it in "ſimplicity and godly ſincerity;" and, as the apoſtle ſays in this paſſage, "renounced the hidden "things of diſhoneſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor hand-"ling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifeſtation "of the truth, commending ourſelves to every man's con-"ſcience, in the ſight of God." And "ſingleneſs of heart" was from the beginning the remarkable effect of it in them that believed it; therefore it is ſaid, Eph. iv. 21. 22. 23. 25. "If ſo be ye have heard him, and have been taught "by him, as the truth is in Jeſus: that ye put off con-"cerning the former converſation, the old man, which is "corrupt according to the deceitful luſts, and be renewed "in the ſpirit of your mind.—Wherefore putting away "lying, ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour: for we "are members one of another."

They who would pleaſe God by ſincerity, and make that which they ſuppoſe or ſeek to find in themſelves the term of their acceptance with him, would do well to examine their ſincerity in this profeſſion, That God is well pleaſed in his beloved Son. For if this faith be not unfeigned, if they do not unfeignedly love this truth, and them that are of it, there is no ſincerity in them. No man can be ſincere in this profeſſion without the ſpirit of faith. And every one that is ſincere in this profeſſion, puts off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts.

5. The "humility" and "ſelf-denial" of Jeſus was the effect of the ſpirit of faith in him. For believing himſelf to be the Son of God come down from heaven, to give his fleſh and blood for the life of the world; therefore, having taken upon him the form of a ſervant, and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs. When he condeſcended to waſh the feet of his diſciples, and Peter

ter refuſed it, he ſignified to him, that if he did not humble himſelf, and condeſcend farther to waſh him from his ſins in his own blood, he could have no part with him: And when he called his diſciples to humility and ſelf-denial, in ſerving one another, he ſet his own example before them in this manner, "For even the Son of man came not to "be ſerved, but to ſerve, and to give his life a ranſom for "many." When Peter, who had confeſſed the faith of the Son of God, ſhewed averſion to his humbling himſelf to the death, he rebuked him ſeverely; and aſſured all his followers, that they muſt deny themſelves, take up their croſs, and follow him. The ſame mind muſt be in them that was alſo in him, if they have the ſame ſpirit of faith, and believe the ſame truth that he believed. It was in the faith of this truth, that he ſhewed the greateſt ſelf-denial, and moſt humble ſubmiſſion to the will of the Father, when he ſaid, "Not my will, but thine be done:" for he looked on himſelf in the view that is expreſſed in theſe words, "Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and "ſin-offering thou didſt not will, neither waſt well pleaſed, "(which are offered by the law); then ſaid he, Lo, I "come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the firſt, "that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond. By the which will we "are ſanctified, through the offering of the body of Jeſus "Chriſt once. —— For by one offering he hath perfected "for ever them that are ſanctified," Heb. x. 8. 9. 10. 14. So, believing himſelf to be the Son of God, in whoſe ſacrifice of himſelf the Father is well pleaſed, he denied himſelf to the death for his pleaſure in the eternal reconciliation of his people unto him: and they who believe this ſame truth for their juſtification, muſt be thereby ſelf-denied and humble; as they ſee the Son of God humbled to death for the pride that ſeparated them from God, and behold how agreeable humility and ſelf-denial is to God; and as they know that he is not to be well pleaſed in them, through any excelling qualification whereby they may glory over other men, but only in his beloved Son, by whoſe one offering all ſorts of ſinners, without diſtinction, are eternally conſecrated to God. The faith of this in a ſinner drawing near to God, ſtrikes at the root of all his pride; while they that would preſume to pleaſe God, in the way of thanking him that they are not as other men, (let it be even for their humility), are cheriſhing within their hearts the very ſpring of all that pride that is hateful to God, and

from

from which they must be converted, and become as little children, or never enter his kingdom.

The love of the truth that Jesus believed and spake, is described in opposition to all the work of pride, 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 5. "Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is "not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh "not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." And therefore the apostle John, exhorting Christians to love one another for the truth's sake, always speaks to them as "little children," made so by the knowledge of the truth. Jesus, who believed and spake this truth, is pointed out to us in these words, Psal. cxxxi. "My heart "is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exer-"cise myself in great matters, or in things too high for "me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a "child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a "weaned child." And all they who have this for the ground of their hope of acceptance with God, must be the same way disposed, must be learning of him this same meekness and lowliness of heart. As Jesus sought not his own glory, but the honour of him that sent him, when he spake this truth that he believed, and was greatly afflicted; even so we see from this passage how his apostles behaved, believing and speaking the same truth, vers. 5. "We "preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our-"selves your servants for Jesus sake." Their pretended successors have behaved manifestly in the very contrary way, to the reproach of Christianity. But this came to pass through their "departing from the faith," as the apostles foretold.

6. The spirit of faith in Jesus caused him to hope for the joy that was set before him in the word, that comforted him under his great affliction. For faith in him, as well as in all his people, answers to this description that the apostle gives of it, Heb. xi. 1. "Faith is the confidence of "things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And so he says in this passage, "Our light affliction, which is "but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding "and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the "things which are seen, but at the things which are not "seen."

The hope of Jesus is thus described by the Psalmist, Psal. xvi. 9. 10. 11.—"My flesh shall rest in hope. For thou "wilt not leave my soul in the separate state; neither

"wilt

" wilt thou ſuffer thine holy one to ſee corruption. Thou " wilt ſhew me the path of life: fulneſs of joys with thy " countenance, pleaſures at thy right hand for evermore." In this hope he commended his departing ſpirit into the Father's hands, and promiſed to the thief on the croſs the happineſs of the heavenly paradiſe, that very day, with him in the ſeparate ſtate. And we ſee, from the beginning of the following chapter, that the apoſtles, having the ſame ſpirit of faith, expected, upon the diſſolution of the body, to be preſent with the Lord Jeſus in heaven, to be " at home" there with him from whom they were now " abſent" in the body, and to " ſee" him there in whom they now " believed." Jeſus hoped to be made full of joy with the Father's countenance, that was hid from his ſoul for the ſins of his people, and promiſed himſelf fulneſs of joy in the neareſt view and moſt lively ſenſe of that which he ſaw not, but only believed, when he was greatly afflicted; even the ſenſe of the Father's being well pleaſed in him. He hoped that his ſoul, beholding the Father's reconciled face, would have communion with the Father in that ſame divine glory that he, the Son of God, had with him before the world was. And he will give this ſame glory to the ſouls of them that believe, who " being juſti- " fied by faith, rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Jeſus expected that the Father, well pleaſed in his obedience to the death, would reward it by a glorious life from the dead at his right hand. He hoped for this reward as the full manifeſtation of the Father's infinite ſatisfaction and delight in the " doing of his will" by his beloved Son. He looked for a reward, in that life from the dead, ſuitable to the dignity of his divine perſon condeſcending to do this ſervice, and in the enjoyment of which he would appear like himſelf, and as it becomes the Son of God to appear. So that if he was humbled to death in the body prepared to him when he came to do the Father's will, he hoped to be exalted in that body by a glorious life from the dead on the Father's right hand, reigning in midſt of his enemies till they be made his footſtool, judging the world, and inheriting all things made new, as heir of all things; and by this he expected that the divine glory of his perſon, which he had with the Father before the world, and which was vailed in his humiliation, ſhould ſhine forth in its brightneſs to angels and men. Therefore he prayed the Father in theſe words, " I have glorified thee on the earth,

" I

" I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.
" And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own ſelf,
" with the glory which I had with thee before the world
" was."

As Jeſus hoped for this glorious life from the dead to himſelf, and to all his people, as his reward; ſo all that have the ſame ſpirit of faith hope to ſhare with him, as joint heirs, in that reward of his doing that will of the Father whereby they are juſtified. And ſo the apoſtle ſays in this context, " Knowing that he which raiſed up the
" Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall pre-
" ſent us with you." They that have the ſpirit of faith hope for his coming, having his reward with him, to give to every one of them according to his works of love to the truth manifeſting their belief of it. And they are encouraged in the work of faith and labour of love, and in ſuffering for the truth, by that Holy Spirit of promiſe giving them fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt in the light of the Father's countenance, as an earneſt of the glory that ſhall be revealed in them; ſo that " hope maketh not aſhamed,
" becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in their hearts
" by the Holy Ghoſt." And this is the Chriſtian hope that every man muſt be a ſtranger to who has not the ſpirit of faith.

7. The " patience" of Jeſus was the effect of the ſpirit of faith in him when he was greatly afflicted. And this patience appeared in his apoſtles having the ſame ſpirit of faith, as we ſee from this text and context. Patience includes faith, and all the other effects of it, as being our abiding and continuing in them under the trial of faith. Therefore James ſays, " Let patience have her perfect
" work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting no-
" thing." The trial of faith gives room to the whole work of faith. And patience includes all that work. But hope is an eſpecial ingredient of it. Therefore it is called the " patience of hope." And we ſee it was ſo in Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, " who, for the joy that
" was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the
" ſhame." Patience in ſuffering with Chriſt, and conſolation by the following glory, is the great ſcope of the ſcriptures of the prophets, in whom " the Spirit of Chriſt teſti-
" fied beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory
" that ſhould follow." And the goſpel, preached by the apoſtles with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, declaring

claring the ſufferings of Jeſus, with his following glory, and calling us to ſuffer with him, that we may be glorified together, is wholly a doctrine of patience and conſolation. So that God, manifeſted in the goſpel, is by this diſtinguiſhed, and from this ſtyled, "The God of patience and "conſolation." And they who believe to be juſtified by Chriſt's patience, and look for the glory following his ſufferings, muſt "arm themſelves with the ſame mind," to ſuffer with him who "hath ſuffered for them in the fleſh." Therefore we find Paul, profeſſing his faith in Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and love to that, in oppoſition to his own; at the ſame time ſhewing a ſtrong deſire toward the "fellow-"ſhip of his ſufferings," and "conformity to his death," that ſo he might "attain to that reſurrection of the dead." And he tells us, that all true Chriſtians muſt be "thus "minded."

When men profeſſing Chriſtianity departed from the apoſtolic faith, they ſtudied to ſhun ſuffering perſecution for the croſs of Chriſt. And having got hold of worldly power to defend themſelves from perſecution, they departed from Chriſt's command of "ſubjection to the powers "that be;" and they at laſt employed that power to perſecute in the name of the "patient Jeſus!" But this is one of the characters of Antichriſt; in oppoſition to whom we find the character of Chriſt's followers in the faith thus ſtated in the book of the Revelation: "He that leadeth "into captivity, ſhall go into captivity: he that killeth "with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword," (compare Matth. xxvi. 52.). "Here is the PATIENCE and "the FAITH of the ſaints."

Having thus mentioned the moſt remarkable effects of faith in Jeſus, and having at the ſame time obſerved how they appeared in thoſe who had the ſame ſpirit of faith; we may now, by theſe, reflect upon our belief, and ſee if it can appear unfeigned by its proper fruits. For if we have that ſame ſpirit of faith, it muſt have the ſame effects in us: and if we have it not, we are none of Chriſt's, we are not Chriſtians.

Let us ſhew our faith by its fruits. And if we cannot pretend to come up to the perfection of the ſinleſs pattern, we may go forth by their footſteps who ſtand in the New Teſtament as patterns of the imitation of Chriſt, having the fleſh in them luſting againſt the ſpirit of faith, as well as we. The Hebrews are put in mind of the apoſtles, who

firſt preached the goſpel to them, and were their firſt preſbyters or biſhops in Jeruſalem, when it is ſaid to them, Heb. xiii. 7. "Remember your rulers who have ſpoken unto "you the word of God: whoſe faith follow, conſidering "the end of their converſation. Jeſus Chriſt the ſame "yeſterday, and to day, and for ever." Paul appears in the New Teſtament as the pattern of the long-ſuffering and grace of our Lord exceeding abundant to ſinners, with faith and love that is in Chriſt Jeſus. And if we be partakers of that grace, to them that believe in Chriſt to eternal life, whereof we have a pattern ſhewed us in Paul; then we muſt take him likewiſe for our pattern in following Chriſt; as he ſays, "Be ye followers of me, even as "I alſo am of Chriſt;" and as he alſo ſays, "Thoſe things "which ye have both learned and received, and heard "and ſeen in me, do, and the God of peace ſhall be with "you." Thoſe things which they had heard and ſeen in him, are the ſame that he calls "true, honeſt, juſt, pure, "lovely," and "of good report." And theſe were the effects of faith. In theſe lay the "virtue" of the firſt followers of Jeſus, and theſe had the "praiſe" among them.

NOTES

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER III.

The FALL of the ANGELS; The FALL of MAN; Obſerves on the SERMON on the MOUNT; The FLESH and SPIRIT; The RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD by FAITH; and, SALVATION to a BELIEVER'S HOUSE.

Thy righteouſneſs is *an everlaſting righteouſneſs, and thy law is the truth.* Pſal. cxix. 142.
The righteouſneſs of thy teſtimonies is *everlaſting.* Verſ. 144.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1748.]

The FALL of the ANGELS.

JOHN viii. 40. 44. 45.

But now ye ſeek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God.——Ye are of your father the devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; becauſe the truth is not in him. When he ſpeaketh a lie, he ſpeaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And becauſe I tell the truth, ye believe me not.

THE "truth" that the "man" Jeſus "heard of God" was, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed," Luke iii. 22. He heard this from the Father, at the baptiſm of John, who was ſent to manifeſt him to Iſrael, and who "bare record that this is the "Son of God," and pointed him out as "the Lamb of "God that taketh away the ſin of the world." This truth

was immediately called in queſtion, and the faith of Jeſus tried by Satan in the temptation. And Jeſus, when he had overcome him by the word of God, preached this truth; and manifeſted it, by the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, by the teſtimony of John Baptiſt, by the divine works that he wrought even as the Father, and by the Father's teſtimony: and he at laſt died upon it; referring to his reſurrection, and the glory following his ſufferings, as the full proof of it. His diſciples, who believed this truth, worſhipped him; while it was the great point of religion with them, as with every Jew at that time, to worſhip God only: and this point was ſtrongly held, againſt Satan, by Jeſus, who received worſhip from the believers of this truth. And the Jews, who believed it not, ſought to kill him for it; as we ſee from John v. 16. 17. 18. "And therefore "did the Jews perſecute Jeſus, and ſought to ſlay him, be- "cauſe he had done theſe things on the ſabbath-day. But "Jeſus anſwered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and "I work. Therefore the Jews ſought the more to kill "him; becauſe he not only had broken the ſabbath, but "ſaid alſo, that God was his Father, making himſelf equal "with God." John viii. 58. 59. "Jeſus ſaid unto them, "Before Abraham was, I AM. Then took they up ſtones "to caſt at him." John x. 30.—33. "I and my Father "are one. Then the Jews took up ſtones again to ſtone "him.—For a good work we ſtone thee not; but for "blaſphemy, and becauſe thou, being a man, makeſt "thyſelf God." And they at laſt paſſed a ſolemn ſentence of death on him, as a blaſphemer, for aſſerting this truth; which was ſoon after demonſtrated by his reſurrection from the dead, and by the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt.

While the Jews were oppoſing this truth, they pleaded a peculiar relation to God, as his children by their father Abraham. But they knew not that this privilege, wherein they boaſted, was founded in their fleſhly relation to Chriſt, that "ſeed" promiſed to Abraham, who is the Son of God. And Jeſus [illegible] to them, that, while they were guilty of oppoſing this truth, they could be no otherwiſe in the family of God, than Ishmael the ſervant, the ſon of the bond-woman, was in Abraham's houſe, who was caſt out for perſecuting Iſaac the ſon and heir; and that the true and everlaſting freedom of children in God's houſe, in diſtinction from bond-men, is only through him who is the

true

true Son of God. And he ſhewed them the vanity of their boaſting in Abraham as their father, when they did not the works of Abraham, who rejoiced to ſee his day afar off; but did the deeds of another father, even the devil, who abode not in the truth, and was a murderer: for they ſhewed themſelves to be his "ſeed," by ſeeking to kill him who told them the truth.

The "truth," then, wherein the "devil" abode not, muſt be that ſame which Abraham believed and rejoiced in, and which this ſpurious ſeed of Abraham diſbelieved and hated. And ſo we have here an account of the devil's fall from his firſt eſtate. He is here diſtinguiſhed from the angels that ſtood, by this: He "ſtood not in the truth." This plainly imports, that this ſame truth was made known to him, and ſome way acknowledged by him, before he fell; and that he fell by apoſtaſy from it.

All the angels are repreſented as harmoniouſly praiſing God when the earth began to be formed, Job xxxviii. 4. to 7. "Where waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the "earth? — when the morning-ſtars ſang together, and all "the ſons of God ſhouted for joy." As they were witneſſes, from the beginning, to the formation of this viſible world out of the earth without form and void, with the darkneſs covering the face of it; they could not be ſtrangers to the ſolemnity wherewith it was finiſhed in man, whom they ſaw made in the image of Elohim. And this was a very proper occaſion for their having notice of this great truth, That the Son of God was to be united with his creatures in man, and in this creature have dominion over all things that were created by him, in heaven and earth, viſible and inviſible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. Whereas the elect holy angels ſtand in the humble acknowledgment and love of this truth; the devil, with his angels, fell by a proud diſaffection to it. And ſo he became a liar, and a murderer; as he was to the parents of mankind, and, after the truth was revealed to them, ſtirred up Cain his child to murder Abel, a believer and lover of it.

The devil, when he fell from the truth, changed the word of God, concerning "the tree of knowledge of good "and evil," into a lie, by a falſe gloſs; and ſo deceived our firſt parents, and murdered mankind, in his enmity to this truth. And his children the Jews, under his influence, turned the revelation of the Old Teſtament, concerning that

that " ſeed," the " Meſſiah," into a lie; and ſo killed the Meſſiah for the truth, which they condemned as blaſphemy.

They boaſt in vain of the ſincerity of their inquiries, and of their love to truth in general, who have this truth revealed to them as it is in the goſpel, and yet cannot ſubmit to it: for this truth never was, nor can be oppoſed, without that deceit and proud enmity, which came to be the devil's character, through his not ſtanding in this ſame truth.

The apoſtle gives this reaſon why a " novice," or one newly planted in the church, ſhould not be put in the biſhop's office, however he may appear otherwiſe qualified for it, " leſt, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condem-" nation of the devil," 1 Tim. iii. 6. And this lets us ſee, that the devil fell by being lifted up with pride: for he, finding himſelf a glorious chief among angels, the higheſt order of creatures, and far excelling man, could not ſubmit to the truth, could not bear the thought, that the Son of God, condeſcending to unite himſelf with the creatures, ſhould not take on him the nature of angels, but become that lower creature man; and, being made lower than the angels for the ſuffering of death, ſhould, in his human nature, rule over angels, as ſervants to him, and his redeemed church of mankind. Jeſus oppoſes his own character to this pride in the devil, and in thoſe who are under his influence, when he ſays, " I have not a devil; but I honour my Fa-" ther;——and I ſeek not mine own glory." The oppoſition made by men to the truth, as it is revealed among them, flows alſo from their pride, deſpiſing the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleaſed; while they value themſelves by thoſe things wherein they glory over one another, judging that it becomes God to be well pleaſed in them, beyond others whom he has not made ſo fit for acceptance with him. For thus we ſee the Phariſee is repreſented applying for the favour of God, " God, I thank thee, I am " not as other men,—or even as this publican." It was this pride that moved the Jews to hate the Lord Jeſus; becauſe he teſtified, that their works of righteouſneſs were evil, and could not pleaſe God; and that he was well pleaſed in him, his beloved Son, who came to fulfil the law, which none of them were keeping, and who came down from heaven to give his fleſh and blood for the life of the world. They could not bear the truth, by which, not the righteous, but ſinners, were called to repentance, and the

publicans

publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God before the Phariſees. Paul points out this pride as the ſpring of their oppoſition to the goſpel, when he ſays, Rom. x. 3. "They being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going "about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſub- "mitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God." We cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, except we be converted from this pride, that will not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God; and become as little children, receiving it as they who can do nothing to intitle themſelves to it. And, by converting us from this pride, God tranſlates us from the power of darkneſs, or the kingdom of Satan, into the kingdom of the Son of his love, "in whom we have re- "demption through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of "ſins."

The oppoſition that Judaiſing Chriſtians made to the truth, flowed alſo from this pride, whereby they would glory in ſomething beſides Chriſt's croſs. And this ſame pride is the root of the Antichriſtian departure from the faith, and of all that oppoſition to Chriſt in the name of Chriſt that we ſee in the world called "Chriſtian." The apoſtles Peter and Jude compare this apoſtaſy of Antichriſt to the fall of the angels, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude, verſ. 6. Jude deſcribes the ſin of theſe angels, for which they are "reſerved in e- "verlaſting chains under darkneſs, unto the judgment of "the great day," in this manner, "The angels which kept "not their beginning, but left their own habitation." This makes their ſin to be apoſtaſy like that by which Iſrael fell in the wilderneſs, verſ. 5. And that from which they apoſtatized, was, ſays Jude, their own "beginning," and their proper "habitation." The "beginning, ἀρχὴ, is a title of the Son of God, frequent in the New Teſtament, taken, as would ſeem, from Prov. viii. 22. where Wiſdom ſays, "The Lord poſſeſſed me, the beginning, his way, before "his works from thence." We ſee him alſo called God's "way" by Moſes, Exod. xxxiii. 13. And Jeſus, referring to this, calls himſelf the "way," John xiv. 4. 5. 6. Now, this is the "beginning," God's "way" to his works, that theſe angels kept not when they abode not in the truth. And we may ſee from the following ſcriptures, what was their native "habitation" which they "left" when they ſtood not in the truth, Deut. xxxiii. 27. "The eternal God thy "refuge." Heb. "habitation." Pſal. xc. 1. "Lord, thou "haſt been our dwelling place." Pſal. xci. 1. "He that "dwelleth

" dwelleth in the ſecret place of the Moſt High, ſhall abide " under the ſhadow of the Almighty;" and verſ. 9. " Be- " cauſe thou haſt made the Lord" which is " my refuge," even " the Moſt High, thy habitation." Pſal. lxxi. 3. " Be " thou to me for a rock of habitation." And the apoſtle John, ſpeaking of the love of that truth for the ſake of which Chriſtians love one another, even the truth wherein the devil abode not, ſays, 1 John iv. 15. 16. " He that dwelleth in " love, dwelleth in God."

The devil kept not his beginning, but left his own habitation, by ſeeking his own glory aſide from him who was his beginning. And ſo, envying man for the ſake of that truth, which he looked on as debaſing to himſelf, he went about to deceive him, and ſought his death, if thereby he might overthrow the truth. Yet this ſame oppoſition made way for the revelation of the truth among fallen mankind to his deſtruction. And when the Jews, under his influence, killed Jeſus for the truth, this alſo ſerved to diſcover it more glorioufly, to the deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation, and the ſalvation of the whole ſeed of the woman. And the Son of God, through his death, deſtroys the devil, and delivers his own people of all ſorts of mankind.

And ſo ſhall the truth always triumph over all the deceit and violence wherewith it can be oppoſed, to the ruin of its oppoſers, the " ſerpent" and " his ſeed."

The FALL of MAN.

GEN. iii. 1.—6.

Verſ. 1. NOW *the ſerpent was more ſubtil than any beaſt of the field which the Lord God had made:* —

It appeared ſo in the fact here narrated. And the New Teſtament lets us underſtand how it came to be ſo, by pointing to this paſſage in deſcribing the devil as the deceiver of mankind, Rev. xii. 9. " That old ſerpent, called " the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Rev. xx. 2. 3. " And he laid hold on the dragon, that old " ſerpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a " thouſand years, —— that he ſhould deceive the nations no " more, till the thouſand years ſhould be fulfilled." 2 Cor. xi. 3. " But I fear, leſt by any means, as the ſerpent be- " guiled

" guiled Eve through his ſubtilty, ſo your minds ſhould be " corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt." See verſ. 4. 13. 14. 15. This great ſubtilty of the ſerpent was owing to the poſſeſſion of the devil. It was he that opened its mouth to ſpeak. And the leſs it had of natural capacity for ſpeech and reaſoning upon what paſſed betwixt God and man, it was the more fit to be his inſtrument in this temptation.

—— *And ſaid unto the woman, Yea, hath God ſaid, Ye ſhall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

The ſerpent's ſpeaking and talking on this ſubject proper to man, could not but ſurpriſe the woman, conſidering its natural unfitneſs, and call in all her attention and thought to the cauſe of an effect ſo extraordinary. And if we ſhall ſuppoſe the ſerpent firſt eating of the fruit of that tree in the woman's ſight, and then ſpeaking as it did; this would lead her to think of a virtue in the tree to enlarge the capacity of a living creature exceedingly in the point of wiſdom and knowledge: for ſhe had a proof of it before her, if ſhe ſaw a creature, which was ſo far below her naturally, becoming capable to converſe with her by no other perceiveable means but the eating of that fruit. And this would ſerve much to give credit to the following bold aſſertion of the ſerpent, " In the day ye eat thereof, ye ſhall be as God;" and prepare her mind to receive it. The beginning of the ſerpent's ſpeech is abrupt: for it has been obſerved, that the Hebrew phraſe, here tranſlated " yea," or " yea becauſe," does not uſually begin a Hebrew ſentence, but ſeems to refer to ſomething going before. And what ſhould it refer to, rather than the ſerpent's eating of the tree of which it ſpeaks to the woman? Yea, we have the very words of Moſes for it, that the woman was induced to eat of this fruit, not only by what ſhe heard the ſerpent ſay, but by what ſhe " ſaw:" verſ. 6. " And when the woman ſaw, that the tree was good " for food,—pleaſant to the eyes, and —to be deſired to " make wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." She could ſee the fruit laid open to her, and behold it within as well as without, by the ſerpent's eating; ſhe could obſerve the ſerpent eating it with ſigns of pleaſure and refreſhment; and ſhe could behold the mouth of the ſerpent opened to ſpeak to her as man, upon its eating of the fruit: and how otherwiſe could ſhe now ſee, more than before, that it was pleaſant to the eyes, good for food, and to be deſired to make wiſe? Thus the ſerpent was more ſubtil than

any living creature of the ground; beguiling the woman, firſt by action, and then by words, both well fitted to deceive.

The devil, poſſeſſing the ſerpent, knew well where to make the impreſſion in this attack. He applied himſelf to the woman, as moſt eaſily impreſſed through the delicacy of her conſtitution; that by her, whom God had made a help meet for the man, and amiable above all creatures to him, the whole temptation might come home upon him with the greateſt force, through the tenderneſs of his affection to the bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh. And ſo we find Adam acknowledging to God, that he was prevailed on by this to eat of the tree whereof he commanded him that he ſhould not eat: verſ. 11. 12. "The woman whom thou "gaveſt with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

Man was made to live by his food; yet not by that alone, nor independent of the Author and Lord of his life, who gave him his meat whereby he ſhould live, Gen. i. 27. 29. and chap ii. 7. 8. 9 15. And this was the tenor of the grant, chap. ii. 16. 17. "And the Lord God commanded "the man, ſaying, Of every tree of the garden thou "mayſt freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of "good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day "that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." This declared man's dependence on God, of whom he held his life and his food. And it was highly proper, that he ſhould live, not by his meat alone, but by the word of God, that granted him food for his life with a limitation and reſerve, ſhewing his dependence on the Author and Lord of his life: ſo that his breaking through this limitation, and eating the forbidden meat, was renouncing his dependence, and forfeited his life. We ſee, in like manner, the grant of fleſh for food to fallen man reſerves the blood, to ſhew his dependence on the atonement which is by blood: and the eating of it was cuting off, or death, by the law of Moſes; even as the New Teſtament makes it a term of communion in the Chriſtian church.

And here it is to be obſerved, that God dealt with man, from the very firſt, by revelation, and what is called "poſi-"tive inſtitution;" and did not, even then, leave him to what was manifeſt in him without revelation, as the ſole rule of his obedience and ſubjection to God, upon which his life depended. He naturally knew God by the things that are made, and had a natural ſenſe of right and wrong in his

his conſcience without revelation. But his life depended not wholly on this. Nor was it laid upon his conduct, regulated by his own reaſoning, when his reaſon was yet right. It depended on a word of God ſpoken to him. And the devil, as he himſelf "ſtood not in the truth" that was revealed to him, tempted man upon the word that God ſpake to him, and not upon what was manifeſt in him without revelation. His buſineſs was, to work upon his ſenſe and natural knowledge, and to turn his reaſoning againſt the revelation upon which he knew his life depended. So we find him taking occaſion from the hunger of Jeſus, to tempt him upon the truth which he heard of the Father, the revelation made to him at his baptiſm. But he ſtood firm againſt the tempter, and foiled him, holding the point that our firſt parents had let go, *viz.* "Man ſhall not live by "bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of "the mouth of God."

The queſtion that the devil put in the mouth of the ſerpent to the woman, together with what ſhe ſaw, ſerved to raiſe a doubt in her mind, and make her heſitate about the goodneſs of God in the revelation of his will concerning the food of their lives, and that tree; and likewiſe about the truth of God in that revelation, as they had been made to underſtand it. In like manner, he moved a queſtion to Jeſus, and ſought to raiſe a doubt, from the ſituation wherein he found him, about the truth that he had heard from the Father, deſiring him to ſeek a proof of it in his preſent condition: Matth. iv. 2. 3. "Jeſus —— was —— an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he "ſaid, IF THOU BE THE SON OF GOD, command that "theſe ſtones be made bread;" and verſ. 6. "If thou be the "Son of God, caſt thyſelf down." And whatever length his temptations may come, they ordinarily begin with a queſtion, and a doubt moved, to draw our attention to reaſonings againſt revelation.

Verſ. 2. 3. *And the woman ſaid unto the ſerpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midſt of the garden, God hath ſaid, Ye ſhall not eat of it, neither ſhall ye touch it, leſt ye die.*

This anſwer to the devil's queſtion has the air of a vindication of the divine goodneſs in his word with reſpect to their food, which ſhe declares; but, at the ſame time, it betrays ſome beginnings of a doubt about it taking place in her mind. For, 1. She ſhuns to call the forbidden tree by

the name given it in the prohibition, " The tree of the knowledge of good and evil;" as ſuſpecting, from what ſhe ſaw, that it was ſo called, not becauſe it ſerved as the teſt to prove good or evil in man, but on account of ſome virtue in it to make wiſe; which ſhe could not reconcile with God's denying the uſe of it on pain of death to man, whom he had made for knowledge. 2. She expreſſes the threatening ſoftly, and ſmooths it: " Leſt ye die," (ſays ſhe), in place of " In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt " ſurely die." And this ſhews ſome heſitation in her mind about ſeverity in the threatening, which, if executed as it was ſaid, ſhe could not reconcile to the goodneſs of God. This ſhe had by applying her mind to inquire into hidden cauſes; which was none of her buſineſs. It belonged not to her to reaſon about the declared will of her creator, to reconcile it with appearances; but to know and do her duty, according to the plain command which ſhe here confeſſes.

Verſ. 4. 5. *And the ſerpent ſaid unto the woman, Ye ſhall not ſurely die: for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened; and ye ſhall be as God, knowing good and evil.*

Here the tempter purſues his advantage, and preſſes upon that place where the woman's mind began to waver and give ground: for whereas ſhe halted at the conſiſtency of the threatening, in its full force, with the divine goodneſs; he boldly denies the neceſſary connection betwixt diſobedience and death, and ſays, " Ye ſhall not ſurely die." And then, to ſupport this, he gives ſuch a meaning to the name that God gave the forbidden tree, as agreed with what ſhe " ſaw." And from that appearance, as a fact, he affirms, that God gave it that name, becauſe he knew, that, in place of dying in the day they did eat thereof, they would become wiſe as God.

If we take " knowing good and evil" in the devil's ſenſe here, where he commences interpreter of revelation to man, he muſt be ſaying ſomething like this: " Ye ſhall " be moral philoſophers, excellent reaſoners, and judges " upon the eternal fitneſs of things: and, in place of being " ſubject, as you are now without aſking queſtions, to the " will of God notified to you in the ſimple dictates of " your conſcience, or in revelation, as not knowing like " him what is fit for you, you ſhall be able to know by your " own reaſoning, what is good and what is evil; and to " judge for yourſelves, independently of God, and from " your

" your own inſight into the nature of things, what is fit " or unfit, and what is good and bad: and ſo you ſhall be " wiſe enough to conduct yourſelves in this matter, even " ſuppoſing there were no God to command or direct you. " And you ſhall be no leſs capable to know and to judge " how it is proper the Deity ſhould deal with you, what he " ſhould in reaſon expect from you, and how he ought to " treat you as to happineſs or miſery." If all this was not intended at firſt by the devil, one thing is certain, it has appeared at laſt among mankind whom he deceives, eſpecially among ſome who look on themſelves as the wiſeſt.

But whatever he intended by " being as God, knowing " good and evil," it is manifeſt, that his wreſting the word of God to man, as he did, ſerved to corrupt man's natural inclination to knowledge, and to the imitation of God; and tended to poſſeſs his mind with ſuch thoughts of God, as would make him a ſinner after the devil's own likeneſs. For, 1. He repreſents God as dealing deceitfully with man in his word to him, which he perverts, and changes into a lie. And when the divine veracity was queſtioned in man's mind, it loſt truth, and he became deceitful in conceiving of God as dealing deceitfully with him. 2. He repreſents God to our firſt parents, as denying them the uſe of that tree which he knew would be more beneficial to them than any thing he had beſtowed on them. And when this took with them, they became alienated from God; enmity took place in their ſouls, and they became evil and malignant, by allowing of a thought againſt the divine goodneſs in forbidding them the uſe of that tree on pain of death. 3. He preſents to them *nature* aſide from God, and points out the power of nature in that forbidden tree, as able to raiſe them, without God, to a ſtate far excelling that wherein God had placed them, even to make them wiſe as God. And when they hearkened to this, then atheiſtical pride took poſſeſſion of their ſouls. They came ſhort of the glory of God, and began to ſeek their own glory, aſide from their creator, relying on nature to make them as God, knowing good and evil. In this manner did the devil draw his own image on man; and man became like him in *deceit*, and *enmity*, and *pride*, as much as he could be without knowing that *truth* from which the devil apoſtatized; and ſo very fit to reſiſt and oppoſe that truth, when it ſhould be revealed to him.

Verſ.

Verſ. 6. *And when the woman ſaw that the tree* was *good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof, and did eat*;—

Theſe three things, which were ſet before her eyes by the action of the ſerpent that ſpake to her, moved her to eat of the forbidden tree, when ſhe was perſuaded, by what it ſaid, that death would not be the certain conſequence of her eating. And theſe motives affected her *heart*, her *ſoul*, and her *mind*, or her *ſoul*, *body*, and *ſpirit*; and tainted all the three *lives* with enmity to God, that plainly ſhewed itſelf in eating of the tree whereof he commanded that they ſhould not eat. See Rom. viii. 7. And, by being thus moved to eat of that forbidden tree, "the luſt of the fleſh, "the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life," took the place of that *love* which God requires in the "whole heart," the "whole ſoul," and the "whole mind." Love to any thing more than God, and without him, is *luſt*. And our inclining to gratify any of our appetites in any point beyond the limits ſet to them in the divine law, is *concupiſcence*, and enmity againſt God; though theſe appetites be in themſelves good, and the gratification of them, within the bounds of God's law, be lawful, and right, and conſiſtent with the love of God. The corruption that is in the world is through luſt in theſe three branches, all ſpringing from this firſt tranſgreſſion. The forbidden tree was thought "good for food;" and here began the "luſt of the fleſh," or the love of all ſenſual pleaſures more than God. It was a "deſire to the eyes;" and here the "luſt of the eyes," or covetouſneſs, entered the human ſoul. And it was "to be "deſired to make wiſe;" here *pride* and ambition took place: for though there were not yet theſe many things in the life of fallen men wherein they ſeek to glory and boaſt themſelves; yet there is none of theſe things more boaſted in than wiſdom, and there is no pride of life greater than the pride of knowledge. Men hardly bear contempt as ignorant and fooliſh, and reſent nothing more than a reflection on their wiſdom. And a man's ſaying to his brother, "Thou fool," is a tranſgreſſion of the law that ſays, "Thou "ſhalt not kill."

—— *And gave alſo unto her huſband with her, and he did eat.*

His eating was from the ſame motives, but inforced to him by the affection betwixt him and the woman, which was corrupted, and turned againſt God, by becoming ſubſervient

ſervient to this diſobedience. For when the woman was deceived and in the tranſgreſſion, her affection to her huſband ſhewed itſelf to be corrupted, in ſetting her on to make him partake with her, and ſo tempt him to diſobedience. And his affection to her was the channel by which the temptation was conveyed to his mind; and by it the motives to the eating of the fruit of the tree found acceſs to him, and prevailed on him to eat of it. And hence came that *ſhame*, which they knew not while that paſſion was not corrupted, and before it ſerved, as it now did, to make them tranſgreſſors of the divine law. See Gen. ii. 25. & chap. iii. 6. 7. While they were innocent, they had no cauſe of ſhame or fear. And therefore, when Adam hid himſelf from the preſence of the Lord, being afraid becauſe he was naked, the Lord ſaid, "Who told thee that thou "waſt naked? Haſt thou eaten of the tree, whereof I com-"manded thee, that thou ſhouldſt not eat?" This ſhame flowed from the conſciouſneſs of guilt, which they knew not before they ſinned. The puniſhment of ſin is called in ſcripture "everlaſting ſhame." And Chriſt, bearing our ſins, ſuffered *ſhame*. But this *ſhame* of our firſt parents pointed to the organs of that connection betwixt them, which ſerved to make Adam a ſinner; ſo they ſought a covering to theſe; for as the woman gave the fruit to her huſband *with her*; ſo he ſaid, "The woman whom thou gaveſt "WITH ME, ſhe gave me, and I did eat."

The apoſtle gives this influence of the deceived woman upon the man in the firſt tranſgreſſion, as a reaſon why he commands the Chriſtian woman to learn in ſilence with all ſubjection, and ſuffers her not to teach or dictate to the man, 1 Tim. ii. 11. 12. 13. 14.

And as we have a divine revelation that ſerves to recover us from all the diſmal conſequences of that firſt tranſgreſſion; let us learn from this paſſage, to take heed of temptations, ariſing from our bread, or from our inclination to the other ſex, moving us to queſtion any thing of the truth of that revelation, or to venture upon the tranſgreſſion or neglect of the leaſt command or inſtitution of that revelation, with hopes of impunity. Let us be jealous over ourſelves, leſt by any means, as the ſerpent beguiled Eve through his ſubtilty, our minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt: and, inſtead of philoſophiſing upon the revelation, or ſeeking any way to be wiſe above

above what is written, let us believe and obey the plain ſimple word of God, which is our greateſt wiſdom.

GENESIS iii. 22. 23.

And Jehovah Elohim ſaid, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, leſt he ſhould put forth his hand, and take alſo of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever; therefore Jehovah Elohim ſent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

PARAPHRASE.

Behold man has renounced his dependence, and is become independent, as a divine perſon, to know good and evil of himſelf, and to be his own director by his wiſdom and reaſoning. With this view he eat of the forbidden tree; and, having entered upon this courſe, he will purſue it. And now, leſt, by doing what ſeems good to him, he ſhould preſume, that the life forfeited by renouncing his ſubjection, is due to him; and ſo take and eat of that tree, which ſerved once as a ſign to aſſure him of life by his obedience, and think to live for ever by it, even as he thought to be wiſe as God by eating of the other tree: therefore let him be ſent forth from the garden, where he was to live happy by his obedience, to till the ground from whence he was taken, till he return to his original duſt, and ſo to feel the effects of his diſobedience, according to the ſentence paſſed on him.

Obſerves on the Sermon on the Mount.

MATTH. v. vi. and vii.

Obſ. 1. THE *law* of which our Lord here ſpeaks, ſaying, he "came to fulfil it," and calling his diſciples to obey it, is the ſame that his apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of, in his epiſtle to the Romans, even the *law* that *ſaid*, "Thou ſhalt not covet." And it is the ſame that his apoſtle James alſo ſpeaks of, when he ſays, "Whoſoever ſhall "keep the whole law, and yet offend in one, he is guilty "of all: for he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid "alſo,

" alſo, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, " yet if thou kill, thou art become a tranſgreſſor of the " law." He calls this " the royal law, the perfect law of " liberty," and " the law of liberty" whereby " we ſhall " be judged." This is the law that was contained in the *ten words* that God ſpake to Iſrael from Sinai; and that is ſummed up in theſe two by our Lord, " Thou ſhalt love " the Lord thy God with all thy heart, ſoul, and mind," and, " Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." And he ſays, " On theſe two commandments hang all the law and " the prophets." His diſcourſe here goes upon this *law*, even the *law* that *ſaid to the ancients*, " Thou ſhalt not kill," and, " Thou ſhalt not commit adultery."

When he makes mention of " the judgment," and " the " council," and of " the judge," the " adverſary," the " officer," and the " priſon," he refers to the judgment in the nation of Iſrael, and to what is called the " judicial law." But he only takes a ſimilitude from this, and uſes it as a figure of the eternal judgment that belongs to the law as he here gives it. And he, at the ſame time, refers in the ſame way to the ſervice of the tabernacle, when he ſpeaks of bringing the " gift to the altar:" for he uſes that only as the type of the heavenly altar, and heavenly worſhip of the New-teſtament church, or " kingdom of heaven;" which is inſinuated to us in this ſermon on the mount, by what he ſays of directing our prayers to " our Father in " heaven," and of " ſerving God," in oppoſition to Mammon, by " laying up treaſures in heaven," and of looking for that " great reward in heaven."

So we muſt conceive the " law," in this ſermon, as ſtanding quite abſtracted from its particular application to the peculiar ſtate of the nation of Iſrael, in the " precepts" and " judgments" of the covenant made with that nation at Sinai.

II. It was far more eaſy to keep the law, as it ſtood in the covenant of Sinai, to be obeyed by the nation of Iſrael, with the promiſe of national happineſs, and the threatening of temporal evils and death, to be executed by the judges, than it is to keep it according to the account that the Lord gives of it in this ſermon.

For, in his account, he that is angry with his brother without a cauſe, is liable to the judgment as a murderer; he that looks on a woman to luſt after her, commits adultery; and he that ſwears by any oath in common converſation, is

a taker of God's name in vain; he that, in place of patiently bearing wrongs, ſtudies to redreſs and defend himſelf by revenging evil on his enemy, and ſhews hatred to him, by neglecting to do him all the good in his power, tranſgreſſes the law of love to his neighbour; he that gives alms, and that prays and faſts, otherwiſe than as in the ſight of the Father in heaven, is as if he did not theſe duties of religion at all; and he that lays up treaſures for himſelf on the earth, in place of laying them up with the Father in heaven by almſgiving, and who is anxious for the future, in place of truſting him with his life, is a covetous man, and an idolater, a worſhipper of Mammon in place of God.

Surely it was not in this view of the law that Paul could ſay he was "touching the righteouſneſs which is in the law "blameleſs." Nor could the young man who came to Jeſus aſking what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life, have the commandments in this view, when he ſaid, "All theſe have "I kept from my youth up."

If the nation of Iſrael kept the letter of the law; if they did not tranſgreſs it ſo as to be liable to puniſhment by the judges, this was their righteouſneſs; and this had its reward, even the national earthly happineſs promiſed in God's covenant with that nation. A man might be blameleſs as to this righteouſneſs, and yet very guilty as a tranſgreſſor of the law in our Lord's account of it. He loved the young man, who could ſay, "All theſe have I kept;" becauſe he had that righteouſneſs of the letter, which God rewarded with the happineſs of the earthly inheritance: but he could not, by this righteouſneſs, inherit eternal life.

Yet there was a foundation in the law of Moſes, for the account that the Lord here gives of it. For when that law ſays, "Thou ſhalt not covet," it plainly touches the thoughts and intents of the heart. And this ſerved to convince him of ſin, who ſaid he was "touching the righteouſneſs which "is in the law blameleſs." We may alſo ſee the ſame thing from that commandment, "Thou ſhalt love the Lord "thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and "with all thy ſtrength:" as likewiſe from the Lord's threatenings, by Moſes, to puniſh men for a wicked thought in their hearts.

The righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees may be called the righteouſneſs of the letter of the law. But the righteouſneſs that is called for in this ſermon, is the righteouſneſs of the ſpirit of the law. This is far more beyond our

our power than the righteouſneſs of the letter. And by this we may perceive that Chriſt came not to free us from the *bondage* of the law, and make it an eaſy *yoke* to us, by giving down any thing of its demand, or by teaching us a more eaſy way of obeying it, to make ourſelves righteous thereby. He inſiſts upon every jot and tittle of the law's demand, according to its ſpirit and full import, as well as its letter. And he aſſures us, we cannot enter his kingdom, except our "righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the "Scribes and Phariſees."

Our Lord here gives us the ſpirit of the law, as the law of his kingdom, the *royal* law, which James calls "the "perfect law."

III. The law, as here delivered by the Lord Jeſus to his diſciples, refers not to temporal judgment, as it did when delivered to the nation of Iſrael by Moſes; but it refers wholly to eternal judgment.

The puniſhment of diſobedience to the law, as here given, is, "caſting into hell," and "hell-fire;" the ſame with "everlaſting fire," and the "fire that never ſhall be "quenched," Matth. xviii. 8. 9. Mark ix. 45.

And the reward here promiſed, and annexed to the required obedience, is heavenly and eternal; "the king-"dom of heaven," the ſame with "the everlaſting king-"dom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt," 2 Pet. i. 11. There is nothing temporal here promiſed to the obedient, (who are called to bear injuries without reſenting them, and are ſuppoſed to be ſuffering perſecution for righteouſneſs ſake), but only the "adding" of food and raiment to them, ſeeking firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, in diſtinction from the nations of this world, ſeeking what to eat and drink, and wherewith to be clothed for the future, by laying up to themſelves treaſures on the earth for that purpoſe. The reward wherewith their heavenly Father ſhall reward them openly, the bleſſedneſs promiſed them, is no other than the "bleſſedneſs" of being "recom-"penſed at the reſurrection of the juſt." This will appear to us in the following ſcriptural view of the beatitudes.

—— "THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 2 Tim. iv. 18. "And the Lord ſhall deliver me from every "evil work, and will preſerve me unto his heavenly king-"dom."

—— "THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED." Rev. xxi. 4. "God ſhall wipe all tears from their eyes; and there

" ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, nei-
" ther ſhall there be be any more pain: for the former
" things are paſſed away."

——" THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH." Rev. v. 10.——" And we ſhall reign on the earth." Chap. xx. 6. " Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt reſur-
" rection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, but
" they ſhall be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall
" reign with him a thouſand years." Pſal. xxxvii. 9. 10. 11. 34. " For evil-doers ſhall be cut off: but thoſe that wait up-
" on the Lord, they ſhall inherit the earth. For yet a little
" while, and the wicked ſhall not be.——But the meek
" ſhall inherit the earth, and ſhall delight themſelves in
" the abundance of peace.——Wait on the Lord, and
" keep his way, and he ſhall exalt thee to inherit the earth:
" when the wicked are cut off, thou ſhalt ſee it." Dan. ii. 44. " And in the days of theſe kings, ſhall the God of hea-
" ven ſet up a kingdom which never ſhall be deſtroyed.
" And the kingdom ſhall not be left to other people. It
" ſhall break in pieces, and conſume all theſe kingdoms, and
" it ſhall ſtand for ever." Chap. vii. 26. 27. " But the
" judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his dominion,
" to conſume, and to deſtroy unto the end. And the king-
" dom and dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom
" under the whole heaven, ſhall be given to the people of
" the ſaints of the Moſt High Ones, whoſe kingdom is an
" everlaſting kingdom, and all dominions ſhall ſerve and
" obey him."

——" THEY SHALL BE FILLED." Rev. vii. 16. 17.
" They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more.——
" For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the throne, ſhall
" feed them."

——" THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY." Jude 21.
" Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto e-
" ternal life." 2 Tim. i. 18. " The Lord grant unto him
" that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day."

——THEY SHALL SEE GOD." Rev. xxii. 4. " They
" ſhall ſee his face." Job xix. 26. " And though after my
" ſkin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee
" God." 1 John iii. 2. 3. " When he ſhall appear, we
" ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is. And eve-
" ry man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even
" as he is pure."

——" THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN
" OF

" OF GOD." Luke xx. 36. " They — are the children of " God, being the children of the reſurrection." Rom. viii. 19. 23. " The manifeſtation of the ſons of God. —— The " adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Rev. xxi. 7. " I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon."

—— " GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN: " FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS " WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU." Rev. xi. 18. — " The time of the dead, that they ſhould be judged, and " that thou ſhouldſt give reward unto thy ſervants the " prophets, and to the ſaints, and them that fear thy name, " ſmall and great, and ſhouldſt deſtroy them which deſtroy " the earth."

IV. The Lord Jeſus gives us the law here in the ſhape wherein he came to fulfil it, who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.

He declares, that he came not to ſlacken the demand of the law, or to looſe the connection betwixt every ſin and the curſe of God, or to make the condition of life and term of acceptance with God leſs than a perfect obedience; but that he came to fulfil it: for he ſays, "Think not that I am " come to deſtroy the law or the prophets *. I am not " come to deſtroy, but to fulfil †. For verily I ſay unto " you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle " ſhall in nowiſe paſs from the law, till all be done."

And truly this was the great errand upon which the Son of God came forth from the Father, and came into the world, to ſatisfy the demand of the law, and fulfil all righteouſneſs for ſinners. Gal. iv. 4. 5. " But when the

* Compare chap. vii. 12. & chap. xxii. 37. 38. 39. 40.

† To fulfil the law here, muſt be to do it fully; even as we ſee, verſ. 19. doing theſe commands oppoſed to looſing them, juſt as fulfilling is here. But a certain author of a catechiſm, who pretends to confine himſelf to ſcripture-words, could not forbear giving us this gloſs on the text, That Chriſt came fully to preach the law. And he ſupports it by two texts, where our tranſlators, either in the text or margin, have rendered the ſame Greek word, " to preach fully." But it will appear, that in both theſe texts the Greek word ſhould have been rendered, " to fulfil," as here, according to its uſual and proper ſignification. The firſt is Rom. xv. 19.; where it appears, from verſ. 18. that the apoſtle calls making the Gentiles obedient, fulfilling the goſpel. And the other is Col. i. 25.; where the following verſes ſhew, that Paul is ſaying, his miniſtry fulfilled God's word in the figurative prophecies of the Old Teſtament.

" fulneſs

" fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son " made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them " that were under the law, that we might receive the ad- " option of ſons." Heb. x. 5. 6. 7. " When he cometh " into the world, he ſaith, Sacrifice and offering thou " didſt not will, but a body haſt thou prepared me; in " burnt-offerings and ſin-offerings thou waſt not well plea- " ſed. Then ſaid I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the " book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Pſal. xl. 8. " Thy law is within my heart."

We ſee him profeſſing this great undertaking, " to fulfil " all righteouſneſs" for his people, at John's baptiſm, and the Father then teſtifying his being " well pleaſed in him." Even as, when he had performed that undertaking, and finiſhed that work of righteouſneſs in his death, the Father demonſtrated himſelf " well pleaſed in him," as having " done his will," by raiſing him from the dead, and recompenſing his ſervice under the law with that ſame glorious heavenly reward that is ſet before us here in this ſermon on the mount.

The characters wherewith we ſee the bleſſings here connected, agree to himſelf in the firſt place; and they are not to be found in their perfection, but in him alone. — " The " poor in ſpirit; —— that mourn; —— the meek; —— " which hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs; —— the " merciful; —— the pure in heart; —— the peace-ma- " kers; —— which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake. And certainly no man ever fulfilled the law, in every jot and tittle, as it is here given, but he alone.

That great reward in heaven, which is here ſet before us, is no other than the reward of the obedience of the Son of God, made under the law, to fulfil it for us. It was by this that we could receive the adoption of ſons, and not by our own ſervice. It is only in his right that we can receive the reward of the inheritance: for he is the " Son;" and, " if" he " make us free, we ſhall be free indeed." And by this only can we ſinners look up to the holy God, as our Father, aſk of the righteous Father the remiſſion of our ſins, truſt in him as our Father, and expect to find him our rewarder, as we are here called to do.

Thus the Son of God hath delivered us from the bondage of the law, without giving down any thing of its juſt demand: and, in place of " a yoke which we were not able

" to

" to bear," he hath made it, as James calls it, " the law of " liberty," to us.

V. The Lord Jesus gives the law to his disciples here, in the shape wherein he fulfilled it, or according to the spirit of it, to be observed by them, as the proof and evidence of their being his disciples, his brethren, and so the children of his Father, in distinction from the rest of mankind.

This is plain enough from his words: " Let your light " so shine before men, that they may see your good works, " and glorify your Father which is in heaven. —— Who- " soever shall break one of these least commands, and shall " teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom " of heaven. —— What reward have ye? —— What do ye " more than others? —— Do not even the publicans so? " —— That ye may be called the children of your Father " which is in heaven. —— For after all these things do the " nations seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that " ye have need of these things. —— And then will I pro- " fess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye " that work iniquity." And we see, in the conclusion of this sermon, he distinguishes those who are saved by him, and shall inherit his kingdom of heaven, from all false professors of his name, and hypocrites, who shall perish from his presence in the judgment, by their " hearing these" his " sayings, and doing them." Agreeably to this, the apostle James, speaking of this same law, says to Christians, James ii. 12. " So speak ye, and so do, as they that " shall be judged by the law of liberty."

The Lord plainly supposes them, who hear these sayings of his, and do them, believing him to be the Son of God come into the world, or made of a woman, made under the law, to fulfil it; and so looking on God as a Father through him, and having a respect to that great reward of his obedience that the Father gives him and all his brethren in joint heirship with him. God may be called the Father of mankind, in a sense wherein he is the Father of the angels that fell, and of every living creature, as well as of the evil and the unjust, upon whom he also makes his sun to rise, and his rain descend, even as upon the good and the just. But, according to the gospel, we are not the children of God but by faith in Christ Jesus; nor can we know the Father, but by the faith of the Son of God. And it is evident from the whole of this sermon, that there

must

must be a respect to him in doing the things that the Lord Jesus here says; and that none do them but they who know the "name" of the "righteous Father," which the world knew not, and which Jesus manifested to his disciples, to whom he gave that word he heard from the Father, and believed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I "am well pleased."

This faith then must be the principle of the obedience that the Lord here requires of his disciples as the evidence of their being his brethren, the children of his Father: even as their inability to do what he says, is the feebleness of their faith with respect to his Father; as he plainly signifies to them, when, rebuking their proneness to that "taking thought" which he forbids, he says, "O ye of "little faith." The knowledge of the Son of God is their proper light. This is their light that must shine in their good works to the glory of their Father which is in heaven. And what can be so proper for reconciling us sinners to the law of God, as the belief of this, that our reconciliation to God, and acceptance with him as our Father, is only by his Son's coming "to fulfil" it? If we believe, that our redemption from the curse, that is inseparable from every transgression, is through his being made a curse for us; must not this belief, so far as it operates on our hearts, alienate us from all unrighteousness? and if we believe, that our acceptance with God as his children, is only through his Son's fulfilling the righteousness of this law for us; will not this belief make us have a respect to all these commandments, and influence us to love all this righteousness? We cannot be said to have a respect to the recompense of reward, if we love not the righteousness which intitles us to that reward: and we are not loving it, if we be not studying conformity to it. If we look for eternal life through Christ's obedience to the death; the consequence of this must be, our following him in that obedience unto that life.

We may therefore say, that he who regards not these sayings of the Lord Jesus, and studies not to do them, believes not that the Son of God came down from heaven to do them, and thereby to procure eternal life for us; and that he is not founding his hope of eternal life on the righteousness of the Son of God, but on some other ground beside that; and so is as the "foolish builder," that "builds" not "his house on the rock," but "on the sand."

And

And we may see, that the faith of Christ's having come to fulfil the law for sinners, being the principle of our obedience to it, makes us walk at liberty in doing what the law requires, makes our obedience free as the obedience of children, in distinction from the service of slaves. He that believeth on the Son of God, who came to fulfil the law, "looketh" (as James says) "into the perfect law of "liberty, and continueth;" and "being not a forgetful "hearer, but a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his "doing:" whereas they who go about to establish a righteousness of their own by the works of the law, are under the curse.

VI. Though the Lord Jesus requires perfection of his disciples, when he gives them the perfect law as he fulfilled it for them; yet he does not distinguish them here from other men by the perfection of their obedience to this law, or by their doing these sayings of his without offending in one point.

He indeed requires perfection. And if the demand of his perfect law be sincerity, then it must be the perfection of sincerity; which comes to the same thing. For if he require not perfection of his disciples, they cannot find themselves sinners in coming short of perfection, or offending in one jot or tittle; there being no transgression where there is no law.

But he makes not the distinction betwixt them and other men to lie in the perfection of their obedience: for he directs them to pray every day to their Father for the forgiveness of their sins, even as for their daily bread, while he distinguishes them from the hypocrites and the heathen in their prayers. And with respect to this, he says, "If ye "forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father "forgive your trespasses." As he supposes men trespassing against them, he likewise supposes them, even when persecuted by the world for righteousness sake, and offended by their brethren, trespassing against their Father, and needing forgiveness from him daily, as they daily need their bread. Now, this is one of these sayings of the Lord Jesus which his people, in distinction from others, must hear, and do, That they should daily pray his Father and their Father for the forgiveness of their sins, as they should always forgive when they pray, if they have ought against any. And he supposes not any day to them, nor any time when they enter their closet to pray, wherein they have no tres-

paſs to confeſs to their Father who ſeeth in ſecret, and diſcerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. If we conſider the law as the ſtricteſt ſect of Jews held it, or as any ſort of men hold it when they accommodate it to their own ability, we might ſay they would not have ſins to confeſs, they would not have treſpaſſes to be daily forgiven: but in the ſhape wherein Jeſus Chriſt fulfilled it, and wherein he here gives it to his diſciples, requiring conformity to him, we cannot at any time ſay before the Father when we pray to him, that we have now no ſin to be forgiven. For his apoſtle John ſays, "If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, "and the truth is not in us. If we confeſs our ſins, he "is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe "us from all unrighteouſneſs."

In that paſſage where our Lord makes being angry with our brother without a cauſe, and the leaſt expreſſions of that, to be murder; he ſuppoſes that his diſciples may find themſelves thus guilty, and remember that their brother hath ſomething againſt them, when they are about to draw near to God in his worſhip: and he commands them firſt to go and be reconciled to their brother. In like manner we ſee him, Matth. chap. xviii. ſuppoſing, that his diſciples, whom he calls "little children," will be treſpaſſing againſt one another; and yet, if they hear the offended, or hear the church, and repent of theſe treſpaſſes, they do not forfeit the character of little children: for he ſays, "If he repent, thou haſt gained thy brother;" and again, Luke xvii. 3. 4. "Take heed to yourſelves. If thy bro-"ther treſpaſs againſt thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, "forgive him. And if he treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times "in a day, and ſeven times in a day turn again to thee, "ſaying, I repent; thou ſhalt forgive him." And when he commands his diſciples to forgive their brethren treſpaſſing often againſt them, as often as they repent; he moves them to this, by ſignifying in a parable, that they are vaſtly more indebted to their heavenly Father, by their treſpaſſes againſt his law, than their brethren can be to them, by the moſt frequent treſpaſſes againſt them; and yet he forgives them aſking forgiveneſs. But he ſhews them, that if they forgive not their brethren, as oft as they repent of their treſpaſſes againſt them; then they are to expect that his heavenly Father will deal with them as the Lord in the parable with the ſervant that owed him ten thouſand talents, and would not forgive his fellow-ſervant owing

owing him a hundred pence: "So likewise shall my heaven-
"ly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive
"not every one his brother their trespasses."

From all this we may see, that Christ's disciples are not to be distinguished from other men by their fulfilling this law as he did, or by their doing these his sayings so as not to offend in any one of them: but they are distinguished from other men, and from those who break one of these least commands, *and teach so*, by their daily repentance of their sins, and by their confessing them daily in asking forgiveness from their Father which is in heaven. And this is like what the Lord says to his disciples of their trespassing against one another. If the trespasser hear the offended, if he repent and ask forgiveness, as oft as he trespasses against him, or if he shall hear the church; he must be forgiven, he must still be owned and acknowledged as a brother in all the offices and tokens of brotherly love. But if he repent not, if he shall not hear the offended, nor the one or two more, and if he neglect to hear the church; then he is not to be looked on as a little child, nor owned as a brother, but must be put away from among the brethren, as a wicked person, and a worker of iniquity. Thus "the righteous falleth seven times, and riseth again; "but the wicked falls into mischief." And thus the gospel is a doctrine of repentance; and the life of a Christian is a life of repentance, and of daily correspondence with God in the business of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.

In that passage where our Lord makes looking on a woman to lust after her to be adultery, he speaks to his disciples as the physician of their souls, comparing the irregularity of their passions to a mortification in the members of the body. And he shews them, that as a mortified member must be cut off to save the life of the body, however loath we be to part with a bodily member; even so must we part with an unlawful passion to preserve the life of the soul, and prevent the second death. And he says the very same, Matth. xviii. 8. and Mark ix. 47. with respect to that pride whereby we are ready to despise and offend his little ones. But this business of mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit is not finished at once, is not the work of a day. It is the labour of a Christian, in distinction from those who live after the flesh, as long as he fights the good fight of faith, and while the flesh lusts against the spirit in him; that is, as long as he lives in the body. See Rom. vii.

21.—24. Gal. v. 16. 17. & 2 Cor. xii. 7. 8. 9. Our Lord here ſuppoſes the corruption of the paſſions in his diſciples. And he teaches them to look on every irregular motion of the paſſions in them, as bringing them into danger of hell-fire; even as a gangrene in a bodily part threatens death to the whole body. And therefore they who regard theſe ſayings of his, muſt be afraid of indulging and gratifying theſe paſſions, as of hell-fire. And they muſt daily ſee the neceſſity of repentance, and remiſſion of ſins through his blood; and the neceſſity of his grace and ſtrength, ſhewing itſelf perfect in weakneſs, to reſt upon them, and preſerve them from being overcome by their luſts continually warring againſt their ſouls.

VII. Our Lord therefore gives us the law here, as he fulfilled it, for theſe purpoſes.

1. To convince us of ſin, and ſhew us the impoſſibility of our becoming righteous by our doing it. And if Paul, who kept the letter of the law, found himſelf a ſinner and a dead man by the law, which ſaid, "Thou ſhalt not covet;" how much more may we find ourſelves condemned ſinners by theſe ſayings of our Lord Jeſus?

2. To oblige us to depend wholly on his righteouſneſs, for acceptance with God, as his children, who hates all iniquity, and is not to be pleaſed with an imperfect righteouſneſs. The ſacrifice of Chriſt alone makes us "perfect as "pertaining to the conſcience." And it is only his righteouſneſs, demonſtrated in his reſurrection, that affords "the "anſwer of a good conſcience toward God." As this perfect law ſhews them who look into it, that they are ſinners daily, they muſt deſpair of perfection; and cannot have the anſwer of a good conſcience, but by the faith of Chriſt's coming to fulfil this law for ſinners. And if we find ourſelves condemned ſinners by the authority of the Son of God in theſe his ſayings; then we have that ſame authority, giving us the liberty of God's children from that condemnation, ſaying he came to fulfil the law.

3. To regulate our repentance, and direct us in aſking the remiſſion of our ſins daily from the Father. For if we continue looking into this perfect law of liberty, we ſhall always ſee both what we have to repent of, and the room that there is for repentance; we ſhall ſtill ſee the need we have of remiſſion, and at the ſame time the ground upon which we are to aſk it, and hope to obtain the bliſsful ſenſe of God's favour forfeited by our ſin.

4. To

4. To oblige us to a daily dependence on his grace, ſufficient to ſupport us in the conflict with our luſts, and in fighting the good fight of faith; following him, the Captain of our ſalvation, in his obedience to the death, unto that eternal life which is his reward. For theſe are his commandments, who ſays, "He that abideth in me, and I "in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit. For with-"out me ye can do nothing."

And this is the narrow way wherein they walk who enter in at the gate of his righteouſneſs, denying their own; and ſo follow him, bearing their croſs after him, to eternal life: whereas, going about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of our own, and indulging ourſelves in the neglect of theſe ſayings of Jeſus Chriſt, is going in at the wide gate, and walking in the broad way that leads to eternal deſtruction.

The Fleſh and Spirit.

ROMANS vii.

THE *law* in this paſſage muſt be that ſame which ſaid, "Thou ſhalt not covet," verſ. 7. And that is no other than the law given by Moſes, that was comprehended in the *ten words* which God ſpake on Sinai to Iſrael, and that he wrote to them on the tables of ſtone: for this is one of theſe words.

The apoſtle ſets this law before us here in two very different views, even as different as *fleſh* and *ſpirit*.

For, 1. It muſt be conſidered as the rule of righteouſneſs to the nation of Iſrael, according to which they were to enjoy national happineſs in the land promiſed to their fathers. Their life and happineſs as a nation, in that good land, depended on the national obedience to the commands of that law; like as Adam's life in paradiſe depended on his obedience. And the conſequence of their diſobedience reached to their poſterity, like Adam's. For indeed it repreſented the law given to Adam.

This is the *letter* of the law. And the ſtate of the nation under it, with the ſuitable diſpoſition of the people to do the national righteouſneſs, and to enjoy the national happineſs annexed to it as its reward, is called the *fleſh*.

The

The apoſtle ſets the law before us in this *carnal* view, without the *ſpirit* of it, when he ſpeaks of it in this manner, verſ. 1. " The law hath dominion over a man as " long as he liveth." Ver. 5. 6. " For when we were in " the fleſh, the motions of ſin, which were by the law, did " work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: " but now we are delivered from the law, that being dead " wherein we were held, that we ſhould ſerve in newneſs " of ſpirit, and not the oldneſs of the letter."

2. The law that ſaid, " Thou ſhalt not covet," muſt alſo be conſidered as the rule of righteouſneſs to Chriſt, the promiſed ſeed, " the end of the law;" who, by a true and perfect obedience and ſatisfaction to its full demand, in name of his people of every nation that ſhould believe in him for righteouſneſs, was to have right and title for them to life eternal from the dead, and heavenly happineſs. This true righteouſneſs was prefigured by the carnal righteouſneſs, or righteouſneſs of the letter; even as this true life and happineſs was prefigured by the fleſhly life, or happineſs of the letter, in the land of Canaan.

This is the *ſpirit* of the law that was given to the nation of which Chriſt, the promiſed ſeed, was to come, and that pointed at the *ſubſtitution* by what it ſaid of " viſiting " the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." And the ſtate of the New-teſtament church under this ſpirit of the law, with the ſet of mind and heart that is agreeable to it, when it has taken place by the ſetting aſide of the *letter*, is called the " newneſs of the ſpirit," in oppoſition to the " fleſh," and to the " oldneſs of the letter." The apoſtle ſpeaks of the law in this view, when he ſays, verſ. 14. " We know that the law is ſpiritual;" and verſ. 22. " I " delight in the law of God after the inward man." And he vindicates the law as " holy, juſt, and good," by this ſpirit of it. (verſ. 7. 12. 13. 14.); without which, and ſeparate from it, it is " the law of ſin and death," verſ. 5. 6. 23. and chap. viii. 2.

He diſtinguiſhes this ſpirit of the law from its letter, as " another law;" and ſets it forth as taking place by the doing away of the letter, and as governing us ſo far as we are delivered from that letter as a law, and from the diſpoſition that is ſuitable to it; as when he ſays, verſ. 4. " Ye " are become dead to the law by the body of Chriſt." Verſ. 6. " But now we are delivered from the law, that being " dead wherein we were held. Verſ. 22. 23. " I delight in " the

" the law of God after the inward man: but I see another " law in my members warring against the law of my mind." Chap. viii. 1. 2. "There is therefore now no condemnation to " them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the " flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of " life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of " sin and death." This distinction is the same with that betwixt the " law of works" and " the law of faith," Rom. iii. 27. and betwixt the " two covenants," the " old" and the " new," Gal. iv. 24. Heb. viii. 6.—13. The new covenant is the spirit of the old. And we find them distinguished by the names of *letter* and *spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. 9. and of *flesh* and *spirit*, Gal. iii. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Paul, while he was " in the flesh, serving in the oldness " of the letter," thought the carnal righteousness of the letter sufficient; and sought no other righteousness, to intitle him to the favour of God and eternal life, but that same which intitled him to his share in the carnal life, or national happiness. But there was a commandment in that same law, that was the rule of that righteousness, which served to let him see there was more in it than he apprehended, and shewed him the imperfection of his righteousness: for he tells us, verf. 7. " I had not known sin, " but by the law: for I had not known lust," or concupiscence, " except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

He who was " touching the righteousness which is in the " law blameless," found himself blameable, as he perceived the letter of the law, that was the rule of his righteousness, directing and commanding not only his outward conversation, but also the thoughts, intents, and affections of his heart: for, in the letter of that law, God had left this door open to lead his people in to the spirit of it.

The consequence of the commandment's coming to him in this manner, while he was in the flesh, and serving in the oldness of the letter, behoved to be, his setting himself, with all his might, to be blameless in this point, wherein he found himself blameable, and to do his best to obey this commandment, " Thou shalt not covet:" and seeing the law admitted the nation of Israel to repentance, and reformation of their breaches of it, he would confess his sin, bind himself with vows and resolutions against it, and pray earnestly for the divine assistance against his concupiscence, that so he might be blameless in the righteousness of the law.

law. But the more he ſet his heart on this righteouſneſs, he would be the more ſtrongly affected to the earthly life and happineſs annexed to it as its reward: and therefore all his attempts to be righteous by "not coveting," ſerved but to quicken his concupiſcence, and inflame his covetouſneſs: ſo that, finding himſelf altogether incapable to keep the command as it came to him, he ſaw his ſin exceeding ſinful, and found himſelf condemned to death by that very law by which he once thought to live. Therefore he ſays, verſ. viii. 9. 10. 11. "But ſin taking occaſion by the command-"ment, wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence. For "without the law ſin was dead. For I was alive without the "law once: but when the commandment came, ſin revi-"ved, and I died. And the commandment which" was ordained "to life, I found" to be "unto death. For ſin taking "occaſion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it "ſlew me."

It was in this ſituation that he came to ſee, that the law had a higher end than the national righteouſneſs; and that it intended no leſs a righteouſneſs than that which is wrought by "him who," in reward of his work, "is raiſed from the "dead," (verſ. 4.), to live that glorious, heavenly, immortal life, whereof the earthly life in Canaan was but a figure. And ſeeing this, he perceived the law to be "ſpiritual," when he found himſelf "carnal, ſold under ſin," as he ſays, verſ. 14.

Man was at firſt made and framed to live the earthly life in paradiſe by his own righteouſneſs. And it was right for him to look for life in that way, while he was obedient to God; even as he had the tree of life a ſign to aſſure him, that he ſhould live by his obedience. But after he became diſobedient, his inclination to live by his own righteouſneſs is nature corrupted. And by this the deceitfulneſs of ſin ſhews itſelf eſpecially. For every attempt of a ſinner to live by his own righteouſneſs, in the way that was proper to innocent man, is oppoſite to the "holineſs, juſtice," and "goodneſs" of the divine law, and reflects on the divine "goodneſs," as it is infinitely oppoſite to every tranſgreſſion of the "good" law. The people of Iſrael after the fleſh, who took up with the letter of their law, and were not led into the ſpirit of it, ſought to live the carnal life by the carnal righteouſneſs. But they were condemned by that commandment of the law, which ſerved to ſhew the ſpirituality of it; as it did in fact to Paul. He was led into the ſpirit of the law.

law. For he believed in Chriſt, " the end of the law for " righteouſneſs:" he delighted in that righteouſneſs in oppoſition to his own, and deſired above all things to be conformed to it: he delighted in that eternal life from the dead, which is the reward of it, ſo as, for the ſake of it, to give up with the earthly life; as we ſee him profeſſing, Philip. iii. 8. 9. 10. 11. But, notwithſtanding this, he ſtill found his " members," or his frame and conſtitution as a corrupted man, ſuited and agreeable to the letter of the law, in oppoſition to the ſpirit of it. And therefore he calls that letter " another law in his membefs," and " the law " of ſin in his members:" for he ſays, verſ. 21.—24. " I " find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is pre- " ſent with me. For I delight in the law of God, after the " inward man. But I ſee another law in my members, " warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me " into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members. " O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the " body of this death!" Though he delighted, after the inward man, in the ſpirit of the law, which he calls the " law of God," and " the law of his mind;" yet he found he could not be wholly conformed and altogether agreeable to this law of his mind, till his body ſhould be diſſolved, and till he ſhould no more bear the image of the earthly man. For he found his very frame and conſtitution, as a ſon of corrupted Adam, diſpoſing and ſtrongly inclining him to live the carnal life by the carnal righteouſneſs, in oppoſition to the ſpiritual righteouſneſs and life wherein he now delighted after the " inward man," or the " new man," Eph. iv. 21.—24. Col. iii. 9. 10. 11.

This new principle of conformity to the ſpirit of the law, influencing him to delight in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, and in the heavenly life from the dead as the reward of it, made the oppoſite principle which led and governed him before, and which he ſtill finds in his *members*, or intwiſted with his conſtitution, very grievous and moſt hateful to him: ſo that he eſteems himſelf wretched on the account of it, and deſires above all things to be delivered from it. And this is that ſtrife betwixt the ſpirit and the fleſh; for which we may alſo ſee Gal. v. 5. 16. 17. 18. Of this ſtrife, no ſelf-righteous worldly man, whatever ſtruggle he may feel within himſelf, can have any experience, till he be renewed in the ſpirit of his mind by the Holy Ghoſt, who raiſed Jeſus from the dead.

They who are in Christ Jesus, "walk not after the flesh." They are not led by the inclination to establish their own righteousness, and to enjoy the happiness of the earthly life: for if this inclination prevail over them, they are in captivity, and find themselves in bondage. "But" they walk "after the Spirit." They are led by a prevailing inclination and desire to be found in Christ, not having their own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of him, and to be made conformable to his death, if by any means they may attain to the resurrection of the dead. And this is quite above nature. This is the "new creature:" for we are "created again in Christ Jesus;" and "if any man be in "Christ, he is a new creature." But nature corrupted, or the "old man," appears in unregenerate men making the fairest profession of Christianity, by their going about to establish a righteousness of their own upon their Christian profession: even as the Jews did upon their observation of the law: for what intitles them to church-privileges, and recommends them to the esteem of good Christians, they will readily think sufficient to obtain the divine favour and everlasting life. And thus men may even make a merit of professing faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But while they do so, they will certainly desire and seek after the earthly life and happiness, in some shape or other, more than that life from the dead which is in Christ Jesus. They must be averse from conformity to his death, and incapable of rejoicing in the hope of his glorious appearing, and heavenly kingdom. And as the natural desire of the earthly life, in corrupted man, cannot be limited by the law that said, "Thou shalt not covet," especially as it is explained and applied in the gospel; they may still be convinced of sin, as Paul was: for they cannot stand before these words, "Why call ye me Lord, and do not the things that I say?" and, "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his com-"mandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." It is only they who are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Therefore we see a form of Christianity connected with all the worldly interests and lusts of the professors of it, and Christian teachers preaching up a national righteousness, and national happiness as the reward of it. It is true, this imitation of the letter that is done away, is a great corruption of Christianity; and the disposition of heart that is suitable

able to it, is much more inexcuſable than it was in the Jews: for if Iſrael after the fleſh, who were under the letter, and walked only after the fleſh, will be condemned by their fathers, who believed in the promiſed ſeed, and deſired a better country than Canaan, even a heavenly, and confeſſed themſelves ſtrangers on the earth; much more will Chriſtians be condemned for imitating theſe Jews now, when the letter is done away, and has given place to the ſpirit of it. But nature corrupted will always work this way, and prevail in every unrenewed man, and govern his life and actions; and nothing the leſs that he exerciſes himſelf much in religion, as Paul did before his converſion.

And when the goſpel is turned by ſome into a ſyſtem of moral virtue, however it be inforced with the motives of future rewards and puniſhments; yet national happineſs, or the benefit of worldly ſociety, is the firſt end of that virtue: and ſo it ſtrengthens that concupiſcence, which the faith of the Son of God, and of eternal life in him, weakens and deſtroys.

The RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD by FAITH.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 9.

——*And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God upon faith.*

THeſe words are a chief part of the notable deſcription of the ſpirit and character of a true Chriſtian that Paul gives us in his own perſon, in oppoſition to corrupters of the goſpel, and falſe Chriſtians: for ſuch there were in the very time of the apoſtles. And as many as are made perfect, as pertaining to the conſcience, by Chriſt's ſacrifice, muſt be the ſame way minded as Paul is here. See verſ. 15. 17. 18.

It is obſervable in this text, that he ſtates an oppoſition betwixt his own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, and that which is by the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God upon faith, επι τη πιστει.

1. He oppoſes the righteouſneſs by the faith of Chriſt, to his own righteouſneſs, which he would not have, while he deſires above all things to be found in Chriſt having the o-

ther. Before he knew Chriſt, he was confident in his own righteouſneſs, and ſo he was eſtranged from Chriſt. But when, upon ſeeing the inſufficiency of his own righteouſneſs, he came to know the excellency of the righteouſneſs which is by the faith of him; he then counted all the things which had been gain to him in the way of righteouſneſs, to be loſs for Chriſt. And now he ſeeks not to have both theſe righteouſneſſes together, the one in ſome ſubſerviency to the other, as did the Judaizers; but he deſires above all things to have the one, and to be rid of the other, as inconſiſtent with it.

" Not having mine own righteouſneſs." His own righteouſneſs, is any thing about him that can diſtinguiſh him from another man as more fit for acceptance with God; any qualification or work of his, whereby he thinks to be intitled to the favour of God and eternal life; ſuch as thoſe things that were gain to him before he knew Chriſt, verſ. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. He excelled in theſe things, whereby, according to the law of Moſes, he had a title to the national happineſs and life in the land of Canaan, and he ſought no other right or title to eternal life. And here he oppoſes, not only theſe things, but all things elſe wherein he could be ſuppoſed to excel, as his own righteouſneſs, to the righteouſneſs which is by the faith of Chriſt.

" But that which is by the faith of Chriſt." This is that righteouſneſs which the goſpel teſtifies, and calls men to believe Chriſt hath wrought. It is the righteouſneſs which is " by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20. 21.; " by " faith in his blood," Rom. iii. 24. 25. 26. & chap. v. 9.; or by believing " on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from " the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was " raiſed again for our juſtification;" or by the faith of his reſurrection from the dead, as Rom. x. 3.– 8. 9. 10. Now, as what comes by faith, or believing a teſtimony, muſt be in the truth teſtified, or in that which is believed; there muſt be a righteouſneſs in the teſtimony concerning Chriſt which is believed, if righteouſneſs come by that faith. And this is that righteouſneſs which the goſpel calls us to believe to have been finiſhed by Chriſt in his death, and to have been rewarded in his reſurrection. If we be found in Chriſt, it muſt be believing the ſufficiency of this righteouſneſs to juſtify us. And it is utterly inconſiſtent with this faith that unites us to Chriſt, to have any dependence on another righteouſneſs. And ſo it is impoſſible to be found in Chriſt having

having our own righteouſneſs. Therefore the apoſtle ſays, Gal. v. 4. "Chriſt is become of no effect to you, whoſoever of you are juſtified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

If we be intitled to life by what we find ourſelves to be, or by what we do through any aſſiſtance; this is our own righteouſneſs. But if we have a right to life by what we believe Chriſt to be, and to have done: then it is by the faith of Chriſt that we are righteous.

2. He oppoſes the righteouſneſs which is "of God," to that which is "of the law."

The law ſaith, "The man that doth theſe things, ſhall live in them;" and, "Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things." —— And this is the law of God. But it is impoſſible for this law to give life to any ſinner. Tho' Paul once thought to live by it, yet when it convinced him of ſin, he found it killed him, and could not make him live: therefore he ſays, Rom. iii. 20. "By the deeds of the law there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight: for by the law is the knowledge of ſin." It muſt therefore not be of the law, but of God, as God, *i. e.* ſovereign, and above the law, that any ſinner is made righteous, and intitled to life: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and a ſin-offering, condemned ſin in the fleſh; that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 3. 4.

To ſet aſide his law, and give the ſinner life without ſatisfaction to its demand, would be to deny himſelf. But it is of him as God, to give his own Son in the place of ſinners, and to make him under the law, to fulfil its righteouſneſs for them, that they might live through him. And ſo it is proper to him, as ſovereign, and above the law, to do what the law could not do, by ſending forth his Son, made under the law, to fulfil it in the ſinner's name, and ſo to live by his own obedience to the death; that becauſe he lives, the ſinner might live alſo. And this is the righteouſneſs which is not of the law, but of God. For though the law be magnified, and made more honourable, by the Son of God his doing theſe things, and living in them, than ever it could have been otherwiſe; yet this came not of the law, but of God's grace, as ſovereign, and above the law. To this agrees what is ſaid by the apoſtle, Rom. iii. 21. to 26.

26. "But now without the law the righteouſneſs of God is "manifeſted, being witneſſed by the law and the prophets; "even the righteouſneſs of God through faith of Jeſus "Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe; for "there is no difference: for all have ſinned, and come "ſhort of the glory of God: being juſtified freely by his "grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus; "whom God propoſed, a propitiation through the faith in "his blood, to the manifeſtation of his juſtice for the paſ- "ſing over of the ſins that were before in the forbearance "of God, unto the manifeſtation of his juſtice in the time "that is now: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of "him who is of the faith of Jeſus."

Here we may ſee, that the grace whereby believers in Chriſt are juſtified, is the grace that propoſed Chriſt Jeſus a propitiation for the manifeſtation of the divine juſtice in juſtifying.

And we may likewiſe obſerve, that to be juſtified "through faith," is the ſame thing to the apoſtle with being juſtified "through the redemption that is in Chriſt "Jeſus," the propitiation of God's providing; even as he ſays, chap. v. 9. we are "juſtified by his blood."

And whereas he ſays, that the righteouſneſs of God by faith of Jeſus Chriſt is unto all, and upon all that believe: ſo he tells us here, that the righteouſneſs which is by the faith of Chriſt, and which is of God, is "upon faith." Agreeably to this, Rom. i. 17. may be thus rendered, "For "therein God's righteouſneſs of faith is revealed unto "faith." We know nothing of this righteouſneſs, but by the divine teſtimony in the goſpel. And it comes to us no otherwiſe, but as it is revealed there to be believed. So it becomes ours in believing that teſtimony. It is not upon our feeling or doing any thing to make us differ from others, as more fit for the divine favour; for there is no difference: but it is upon our believing God, that he ſent his Son to work this righteouſneſs for the ungodly, and hath raiſed him again from the dead, as having fully wrought it. Thus we live, not by our own labour, but by hearing God teſtifying that he is well pleaſed in his beloved Son.

Salvation

Salvation to a Believer's Houſe.

ACTS xvi. 31.

And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe.

THE jailor, inſtead of doing any thing to ſave himſelf, as he propoſed, is here called to believe on the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for his own ſalvation, and likewiſe for the ſalvation of his houſe, *i. e.* his family, or *all his*, as verſ. 33.; moſt properly, according to ſcripture-ſtyle, his children.

There is no mention of a houſe to the eunuch to be ſaved with him, chap. viii. becauſe he could have none.

And if the jailor believed, not only for his own ſalvation, but alſo, as he was called, for the ſalvation of his houſe; all his houſe might as well be ſaved by that faith, as mens children or ſlaves were miraculouſly healed by the parent's or maſter's believing that Jeſus was able to do it; ſeeing the one ſalvation by faith is the ſign of the other.

But if there were no more in it than this, that all his houſe ſhould be ſaved on the ſame terms of believing as well as he; then it might as well have been ſaid, Thou ſhalt be ſaved, and all the houſes in Philippi, or the whole world: for, according to this, there is no more connection in this promiſe betwixt him and his own houſe, than there is betwixt him and any other man's houſe; and no more promiſed him to his houſe in conſequence of his believing, than to any other houſe in the world.

There is a manifeſt connection betwixt men and their houſes in this matter of ſalvation by faith. The Saviour would have little children (and they were the firſt ſufferers on his account) to ſhare of the bleſſedneſs that comes by him. And he ſaid, upon the converſion of Zaccheus, "This day "is ſalvation come to this houſe: foraſmuch as he alſo is the "ſon of Abraham." Peter preached ſalvation firſt in Jeruſalem through Chriſt's reſurrection, ſaying, "The pro-"miſe is unto you, and to your children." And when he alſo opened the kingdom of heaven to the uncircumciſed, he told Cornelius words whereby he and all his houſe ſhould be ſaved. And here again the apoſtle of the Gentiles ſays to an

an idolatrous Gentile, "Thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy "houſe." Thus we read of the houſe of Criſpus, the houſe of Stephanas, the houſe of Lydia, the houſe of Oneſiphorus. And the infants of a believing parent are declared to be *holy*, or members of the church for which Chriſt gave himſelf, "that he might ſanctify and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the word." See *Diſſert. on infant-baptiſm.*

This lays a foundation for family-religion under the New Teſtament. For though ſalvation comes not by generation, yet it comes not by our works, but by faith in him who wrought ſalvation for us and for our houſes. And he that, according to his call, believes on him, not only for his own ſalvation, but alſo for the ſalvation of his houſe, is by this faith qualified and fitted for bringing up his children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," inſtead of inſtructing them how to "eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs," and training them to "walk after the courſe of this world." If our children grow up in alienation from ſalvation by the faith of Chriſt; we cannot excuſe ourſelves by this, that we could not communicate grace to them, as is commonly done in this caſe. But we ought rather to examine ourſelves, if we have indeed believed in the Saviour for their ſalvation, as well as for our own. And it would be very proper for us in this caſe to take to ourſelves the blame of not bringing them up according to this faith to which we are called by the goſpel, with the promiſe of ſalvation to them. Therefore we ſee, that though from the beginning there might be Chriſtians not "ruling their own houſes "well," or not "having faithful children;" yet none of theſe were admitted to bear office in a Chriſtian church: the officers were the heads of Chriſtian houſes, the fathers of Chriſtian families. Yet, if a man has indeed believed in the Saviour for the ſalvation of his houſe, as well as for his own ſalvation, he cannot deſpair of his houſe upon preſent appearances to the contrary, but muſt ſtill hope for the ſalvation of his family, according to that which is ſpoken, "Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, "and thy houſe."

Now, when it is ſaid, verſ. 32. "They ſpake unto him "the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his houſe," we may eaſily underſtand, that they ſpake to him more fully the "words thereby he and all his houſe ſhould be "ſaved;" ſeeing the word of the Lord was ſpoken for the

the ſalvation of his whole houſe, as well as for his own ſalvation; and ſo the word that he heard from Paul and Silas, was as much to them in his houſe who may be ſuppoſed incapable to underſtand it, as it was to him; and concerned them, as much as him. For when he believed, not to be ſaved by what he himſelf ſhould do, but by what he was told the Saviour had already done; what hindered the ſalvation of his children to be connected with this belief as to them, as well as his own ſalvation was connected with it as to himſelf? The word of ſalvation that the jailor heard was to all in his houſe, as well as to him; even as Peter ſaid to the Jews, "The promiſe is unto you, and to your chil-"dren."

It is ſaid, verſ. 34. that he believed. And there is no mention of any other believing but himſelf. The text ſays, "that he believing God, rejoiced in the whole houſe;" ηγαλλιατο πανοικι: as Rom. xii. 12. τη ελπιδι χαιροντες, "re-"joicing in hope." This joy is his, who fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out of the ſtocks in the inner priſon, and ſaid, "Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?" who took them, and waſhed their ſtripes; and having brought them into his houſe, ſet a table to them. It was he that rejoiced, believing God. And certainly it was matter of the greateſt joy to him, who had been juſt before thinking of nothing but the ruin of himſelf and family, to find eternal ſalvation in the Lord Jeſus, not only to himſelf, but to all his houſe.

As there is not the leaſt mention here of any other actors in this whole buſineſs about ſalvation, but the jailor himſelf, with Paul and Silas; it will be hard to prove, and ſo to be aſſured from the text, that the jailor had any other houſe but little children. And how can one then be aſſured, that ſalvation preached through Chriſt, and baptiſm in his name, (the things mentioned relating to the houſehold), were known not to belong to them?

If it can be known from the New Teſtament, that baptiſm belongs not to the infants of a believing parent; then it may be known by the New Teſtament, that baptiſm belongs to theſe after they become adult; being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and ſo profeſſing the faith. But has any man ever pretended to find any thing like an inſtance of ſuch baptiſm in all the New Teſtament? in all the writings of the apoſtles, in all their hiſtory from the beginning, during all the time they lived

and wrote, when many children of baptized parents might have grown up to profess the faith, there is not the least hint of that *ordinance* of the Anabaptists, to which they call men to *submit*, as the "fulfilling of righteousness;" as if they were therein to follow Christ, who came to John's baptism professing his great undertaking to fulfil all righteousness for his people.

When all a man's house is said to *fear God*, or to *believe*, and we understand this of all those in the house who are capable, the only reason why infants in the house are supposed not to be included, is, because they are supposed incapable of fearing God, or of believing. But this is not the case with the salvation that is preached in the gospel: for we cannot say that infants are incapable of that salvation. And therefore, when it is said, "Thou shalt be "saved, and thy house," we must include infants as capable of that salvation. And when it is said, one "was bap-"tized, he and all his," we cannot exclude his little children, who are as capable of baptism as of salvation. For they are as capable of being washed with water in the name of the Lord by the baptizer, whether that washing be by dipping or pouring on water, as they are of the imputation of righteousness without works, and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost; of which they are as capable as they were of the imputation of Adam's sin, and of the corruption that descends from him.

NOTES

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER IV.

The BEGINNING of the GOSPEL; The SIGNS of the TIMES; MERCY, and not SACRIFICE; URIM and THUMMIM; The TRUTH of the SCRIPTURES; The CONVERSION of the JEWS; The KINGDOM of CHRIST in the WORLD.

Thy teſtimonies are very ſure: holineſs becometh thine houſe, O Lord, for ever. Pſal. xciii. 5.
Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Prov. xxx. 6.

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The BEGINNING of the GOSPEL.

MARK i. 1. 2. 3. 4.

The beginning of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I ſend my meſſenger before thy face, which ſhall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtraight. John did baptize in the wilderneſs, and preach the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins.

THE *goſpel* is the good news of the fulfilment of Old-teſtament prophecy in *Jeſus*, the *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*.

This had its beginning in the miniſtry of John Baptiſt, (Acts i. 22.), whoſe work it was to make him manifeſt to Iſrael, as the Meſſiah, and as the *Son of God*, actually come according to the prophecies. And this was more than all the prophets that were before him could do, Matth. xi. 11. 12.

13. This beginning of the gospel was also foretold by the prophets in the words here cited by the evangelist. By the prophecies here applied to John Baptist's ministry, it appears, that the person before whose face he was sent to prepare his way, is *Jehovah*, who was to "come into his "temple," Mal. iii. 1.; *Adonai Jehovah*, who was to "feed his flock as a shepherd," Is. xl. 3. 10. 11. with John chap. x. And so John came, according to these prophecies, "that he should be made manifest" as the "Son of God." See John i. 30.—34. Jesus was manifested to be the "Son "of God" when he was baptized of John, by the visible descent of the *Holy Ghost* upon him, and by the *Father*'s voice from heaven, testifying, "Thou art my beloved Son, "in whom I am well pleased," verf. 9. 10. 11.

He comes to John's baptism with this profession, "Thus "it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," Matth. iii. 15. In this his undertaking the *Father* declares himself "well "pleased," because he is his "beloved Son." And the *Holy Ghost* appears as descending and abiding on the "man "Christ Jesus," to furnish the human nature of the "Son "of God" for the performance of that great undertaking; for he offered himself, "without spot, through" that "e-"ternal Spirit." When Jesus undertakes to fulfil all righteousness, (being "made under the law," and having come, "not to destroy the law, but to fulfil"), he speaks of himself as a representative, saying, as in the name of all those for whom he acts, "It becometh US to fulfil." John's baptism, as applied to Jesus, was the seal and solemn ratification of his engagement to fulfil all righteousness for his people, with the concurrence of the *Holy Ghost*, and the *Father*'s acceptance. And so John, who saw and bare record, not only testified, "That this is the Son of God," but also, that he is "the Lamb of God that taketh away "the sin of the world" And by this he preached repentance, and remission of sins: for it is this that gives room for repentance, and in this are comprehended all the effectual motives to it. This is the only channel wherein pardoning grace flows or could flow, to sinners; and the faith of this is the only principle of that repentance which has for its consequent the blissful sense of reconciliation with God by the blood of his Son, that is called the "blotting out" and the "remission of sins."

John prophesied of the *kingdom* of the Messiah, not only as certainly to come, like the prophets of the Old Testament, but

but as *at hand.* And while he pointed out Jeſus as the Meſſiah, he gave his kingdom ſuch a deſignation as ſerved to correct the Jewiſh interpretation of the prophecies concerning it, and to point out the nature of it, in oppoſition to their miſtake. He called it " the kingdom of HEAVEN," Matth. iii. 2. And the teſtimony of Jeſus before Pilate (John xviii. 36. 37.) may let us ſee, that this is oppoſed to a " kingdom of this world," like the kingdom of God in Iſrael, or like the kingdom that the Jews expected by their Meſſiah. Yea, John's doctrine inſinuated to the Jews, that this kingdom of heaven would not be confined to their nation; and that their being the children of Abraham, could give them no place in it, without repentance, and the remiſſion of ſins, the peculiar property of this kingdom, Matth. iii. 8. 9. 10. 12.

Verſ. 8. " I indeed have baptized you with water, but " he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt;" or, as Mat- " thew has it, chap. iii. 11. " with the Holy Ghoſt and fire." Compare with this John i. 33. 34. " And I knew him not: " but he that ſent me to baptize with water, the ſame ſaid " unto me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending, " and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth " with the Holy Ghoſt. And I ſaw, and bare record, that " this is the Son of God;" and Acts i. 5. " For John truly " baptized with water; but ye ſhall be baptized with the " Holy Ghoſt, not many days hence."

If *Jeſus* was manifeſted to be the *Son of God* by John's baptiſm, much more by the baptiſm " with the Holy Ghoſt " and fire," on the day of Pentecoſt, when *John*'s prophecy was fulfilled, Acts ii. 3. The Jews had paſſed a ſentence of death on him, as a blaſphemer, for ſaying that he was the Son of God in ſuch a way as to make himſelf God. And when this ſentence was reverſed by his reſurrection, declaring him to be the Son of God, as he had ſaid; his being exalted by the right hand of the Father, and receiving of him that promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, (as the full proof of his being well pleaſed in him his beloved Son), was demonſtrated by his pouring out of that Spirit on his diſciples, who had ſeen him aſcend, and heard him promiſe, that they ſhould be ſoon baptized with the Holy Ghoſt. This fulfilled John's prophecy, and verified his record concerning *Jeſus*; this finiſhed the proof of his being the Son of God; and this was the higheſt evidence of his having taken away the ſin of the world by the ſacrifice of himſelf; for by the *Holy Ghoſt*,

Ghoſt, the *Spirit of adoption*, he aſſures the hearts of his diſciples of the remiſſion of their ſins, and of their reconciliation with God, as his children, by the blood of his Son.

And this is the *goſpel* that *Mark* ſays had its *beginning* in the miniſtry of *John Baptiſt*.

The SIGNS of the TIMES.

MATTH. xvi. 1. 2. 3. 4.

The Phariſees alſo with the Sadducees, came, and tempting, deſired him, that he would ſhew them a ſign from heaven. He anſwered and ſaid unto them, When it is evening, ye ſay, It will be fair weather; for the ſky is red: and in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the ſky is red and louring. O ye hypocrites, ye can diſcern the face of the ſky, but can ye not diſcern the ſigns of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation ſeeketh after a ſign; and there ſhall no ſign be given unto it, but the ſign of the prophet Jonas.

Chap. xii. 40, 41. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; ſo ſhall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh ſhall riſe in the judgment with this generation, and ſhall condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*

Luke xii. 54. 55. 56.——*When ye ſee a cloud riſe out of the weſt, ſtraightway ye ſay, There cometh a ſhower; and ſo it is. And when ye ſee the ſouth wind blow, ye ſay, There will be heat; and it cometh to paſs. Ye hypocrites, ye can diſcern the face of the ſky, and of the earth; but how is it, that ye do not diſcern this time?*

THE Sadducees, who denied the reſurrection, angels, and ſpirits, joined with the Phariſees in aſking a ſign from heaven, like the manna of Moſes, John vi. 30. 31. or the ſtanding of the ſun by Joſhua. They wanted ſigns of liberty to their nation, ſuch as God wrought when he freed them from the Egyptian yoke, deſtroyed the Canaanites, and ſettled them as a free nation in Canaan's land.

The ſign of the prophet Jonah portended a very different ſtate of things. Redemption from death and the grave, repentance, and remiſſion of ſins, preached unto all nations without difference, through the ſeed of Abraham, delivered for

for their offences, and raised again for their justification, is a state of things quite different from that which was introduced by the signs of Moses.

The signs of *Moses* were suitable and proper to his *time*; and the signs of *Jesus Christ* were as well suited to his *time*, vastly different from the former. The Jews could observe signs of different and opposite sets of weather. They could know, that a red sky in the evening prognosticated fair weather next day; and that a red louring sky in the morning shewed a present disposition in the air for the opposite foul weather. They perceived, that a cloud rising out of the west, from the great sea, brought a shower; and that the blowing of the south wind, from the dry desert, or from Egypt, brought heat. But they could not distinguish the *time* of the *Messiah* from the *time* of *Moses*, by the difference that was observable in the *signs*. They did not perceive, that the *signs* they now saw, portended a state of things, the very reverse of that which was introduced by the *signs* of *Moses*. They wanted signs of the exaltation of their nation like those former signs. *Jesus* would give them no such sign. And they did not perceive, that the signs he wrought, portended the very opposite of that which they were looking for.

Mercy, and not Sacrifice.

Matth. ix. 13.

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,

Chap. xii. 7. 8. *But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.*

IN these texts, Jesus sends the Pharisees to Hosea vi. 6. to learn the meaning of it. And their ignorance of it appeared by their not allowing works of mercy on the Sabbath, and by their finding fault with him for eating with publicans and sinners; such as he came to call to repentance.

The Lord finds fault with those who go about to establish their

their own righteouſneſs, as ſtrangers to mercy. He obſerves an unmerciful ſpirit in them; and there is a reaſon for it. They find not in themſelves the need of God's mercy. They have ſomething more to plead than the publican. The Phariſees, among other things, eſtabliſhed their own righteouſneſs upon their ſacrifices, and the niceſt obſervance of every inſtitution referring to theſe, paying *tithes* moſt exactly, while they *omitted mercy*, chap. xxiii. 23.

Seeing our Lord's grace to ſinners is here found fault with, we ſhall beſt underſtand this text by what he ſays of himſelf with reſpect to the ſacrifices of the law: for it is of theſe that the text ſpeaks, when it ſays, "I deſired mercy, and "not ſacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than "burnt-offerings." Now, let us ſee his account of theſe, from the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. xl. 6. 7. 8. and from the apoſtle, Heb. x. 4.—10. "For it is not poſſible that the blood of "bulls and of goats ſhould take away ſins. Wherefore when "he cometh into the world, he ſaith, Sacrifice and offer-"ing thou didſt not will, but a body haſt thou prepared "me: in burnt-offerings and ſin-offering thou waſt not well "pleaſed. Then ſaid I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the "book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. Above, "when he ſaid, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, "and ſin-offering, thou didſt not will, neither waſt well plea-"ſed, (which are offered by the law); then ſaid he, Lo, I "come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the firſt, that "he may eſtabliſh the ſecond. By the which will we are ſanc-"tified, thro' the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once." Here is the *obedience* that is "better than ſacrifice," and wherein the "Lord delights," more than in all the "burnt-"offerings and ſacrifices" of the law of Moſes. This is the true ſacrifice, that makes us "perfect as pertaining to the "conſcience," and ſets aſide all thoſe ſacrifices that could not "take away ſins." But, that we may know what the text meaneth, we muſt conſider, that this obedience that is better than the legal ſacrifices, this one offering that pleaſes God, who could not be pleaſed in all theſe, is wholly a work of *mercy*. For as the Father's mercy to ſinners is manifeſted in ſending him into the world, and giving him to be the propitiation for our ſins, to declare his juſtice in the forgiveneſs of ſin; ſo, when he came to do this will of the Father, all that he did, and all that he ſuffered, was in mercy to ſinners, whom he redeemed from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for them, and for whom he poured

out

out his ſoul to death, making interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors, bearing their ſins in his own body on the tree, and becoming a ſin-offering for them, that they might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him. This is "the grace of "our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," well known by every Chriſtian, "that though he was rich, yet for" our "ſakes he became "poor, that" we "through his poverty might be rich;" *i. e.* though he "knew no ſin," yet he became "ſin for us, "that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him," 2 Cor. viii. 6. & v. 21. And by this grace or mercy of the Lord Jeſus, the apoſtle would have Chriſtians moved to the good works of mercy. Now, this doing of the will of God, this wonderful work of mercy, is more acceptable to God than all the burnt-offerings and ſacrifices of the law; as appears manifeſtly by his rewarding it with a moſt glorious eternal life from the dead, ſuitable to the dignity of the perſon who did that pleaſing work, and by his ſetting aſide all thoſe ſacrifices when this work of mercy was finiſhed.

When Jeſus the Son of God had fully done this *mercy*, he then entered into his reſt, ceaſing from his works, as God did from his on the ſeventh day. So the true reſt took place, of which the reſt of the ſeventh day, and the reſt into which Joſhua led Iſrael, was but a figure. By reaſon of this true and eternal reſt, there is *another day* of reſt than the *ſeventh day*, a *ſabbatiſm* remaining to the people of God, even that ſame day on which he ceaſed from his works, and entered into his reſt, Heb. iv. 7. 8. 9. 10. And thus he appears to be "the Lord of the Sabbath-day." And, when we reſt from our own works on that day, what can be more proper than to acknowledge him in works of mercy?

Now, ſeeing it is by this work of mercy that we know the true God, the infinitely *Juſt* and *Merciful*; and ſeeing it is by the knowledge of this that we are juſtified; we may find, that the New Teſtament teaches us, better than philoſophy, what this text of the Old Teſtament meaneth, "I "deſired mercy, and not ſacrifice; and the knowledge of "God, more than burnt-offerings."

God, being well pleaſed with this work of mercy done by his beloved Son, diſcharges us from approaching him with any offering, as if he were not fully pleaſed with "the "offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once;" for we muſt draw near to him in the full aſſurance of this faith, "That "he is well pleaſed in his beloved Son." And, in conſequence of this, he requires of us *mercy*. Having in this man-

ner *ſhewed* us *what is good*, in anſwer to theſe queſtions, " Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord?" and, Where-with " will the Lord be pleaſed?" and, What " ſhall I give " for the ſin of my ſoul?" he " requires of" us, " to do " juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with" our " God," in conformity to him who, in mercy to us, humbled himſelf, and became obedient to death, for the manifeſtation of the divine juſtice and mercy, in our reconciliation to God, Micah vi. 6. 7. 8. They who are ſaved by *mercy*, or without any merit or righteouſneſs of their own, muſt be *merciful:* for it cannot be, that thoſe know God, manifeſted by this work of mercy, who become not lovers of mercy by their knowledge.

URIM and THUMMIM.

NUMB. xxvii. 21.

And he ſhall ſtand before Eleazar the prieſt, and ſhall aſk him the judgment of Urim before Jehovah: at his mouth ſhall they go out, and at his mouth ſhall they come in, he, and all the children of Iſrael with him, even all the congregation.

HE, viz. Joſhua, the ſon of Nun, as appears from the context, " ſhall ſtand before Eleazar the prieſt," (Heb. " to the face of Eleazar), and ſhall aſk him," (Heb. " aſk to him)," *i. e.* Eleazar: for the queſtion here is plainly Joſhua's queſtion, directed to the prieſt before the Lord, whoſe anſwer comes from the prieſt's mouth in the judgment of Urim to Joſhua, who goes out and comes in with all the people accordingly. The ſame thing appears from 1 Sam. xiv. 36. 37.; where the prieſt and Saul draw near to God together; and it is Saul that aſks the queſtion. So likewiſe, 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. and xxx. 7. David bids Abiathar the prieſt bring the ephod; and, when he brings it, the queſtion is put by David, and the Lord's anſwer directed to him. But whether the inquirer's queſtion came alſo before the Lord from the prieſt's mouth, may be conſidered from 1 Sam. xxii. 13. 15.

" The judgment of URIM," *i. e. lights*, or, according to the Greek verſion, *manifeſtations*. Theſe lights ſeem to have been ſhinings from the Shechinah, or glory of the Lord,

Lord, upon the twelve ſtones in the breaſt-plate of the ephod; the ſame that made the face of Moſes ſhine. And theſe ſtones, upon which were engraven the names of the children of Iſrael, ſhining with that perfect light, when the Lord's *judgment* was given, were called *Urim*, lights, and *Thummim*, perfections; for which the Greek has *manifeſtation* and *truth*. It would appear from Exod. xxviii. 17. to 30. that theſe ſtones were the *Urim* and *Thummim:* for there is no account of the making of any other things to be put in the breaſt-plate, that can be called *Urim* and *Thummim*, but theſe ſame ſtones. The breaſt-plate where theſe were ſet, is called the "breaſt-plate of judgment." And Aaron, bearing the names of the children of Iſrael in that breaſt-plate, is ſaid to "bear the judgment of the children "of Iſrael upon his heart before the Lord continually." The ſhining of that light upon theſe ſtones in the *judgment of Urim*, may be conceived as the lifting up of the Lord's countenance upon the children of Iſrael.

"At his mouth," or "upon his mouth;" that is, the mouth of Eleazar the prieſt: for we ſee from John xi. 5. that it belonged to the high prieſt to propheſy, even after the Jews wanted the *Urim* and *Thummim*, which they had not after the captivity, Ezra ii. 63. Neh. vii. 65. The anſwer that God gave by *Urim* was put in the mouth of the high prieſt, who had it by inſpiration: and what he ſaid, was manifeſted to be from the Lord, by the ſhinings of the ſtones in the breaſt-plate of the ephod, with that perfect light. When the inquirer, ſtanding before the prieſt, or "to his face," ſaw this, he was aſſured by it, that what the prieſt ſaid to him was the Lord's gracious anſwer to his queſtion.

Now, this was one of theſe "divers manners" wherein "God ſpake" of old "in the prophets." But he "hath, "in theſe laſt days, ſpoken to us in the Son, — the bright-"neſs of his glory;" who, "when he had by himſelf pur-"ged our ſins, ſat down on the right hand of the Majeſty "on high," Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. And ſo we have in him the true high prieſt, and the true *Urim* and *Thummim:* for the glorious light that abode between the *cherubim*, and that ſhined upon the "face of Moſes," and upon the ſtones of the breaſt-plate in the "judgment of Urim," and was called "the glory of the Lord," was but a figure of the true divine glory ſhining in *Jeſus Chriſt*, by the "miniſtration "of righteouſneſs," unto the minds of all them that be-

lieve in him, for righteouſneſs, by that miniſtration, 2 Cor. iii. and iv.

This is the glory of the divine perfections, whereby the true God ſtands diſtinguiſhed to us in the ſcriptures from all idols and falſe gods. This is the name of God that was proclaimed to Moſes, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. and ſummed up to him in one word, verſ. 14. even the name of the "righteous "Father," whom the world knew not, manifeſted by "Jeſus Chriſt," John xvii. 3. 4. 5. 6. 25. 26. The apoſtle Paul points out to us this glory of God appearing in the manifeſtation of the righteouſneſs of God, by faith of "Jeſus "Chriſt," to all and upon all believers without difference, when he ſays, Rom. iii. 24. 25. 26. "Being juſtified freely "by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt "Jeſus: whom God propoſed" (or "ſet forth before) a pro-"pitiation, through the faith in his blood, to the manife-"ſtation of his juſtice, for the paſſing over of ſins that were "before in the forbearance of God; to the manifeſtation "of his juſtice in this time, that he might be juſt, and the "juſtifier of him that is of the faith of Jeſus." And this is agreeable to what is ſaid by the prophet Hoſea, chap. ii. 19. 20. "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will "betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, "and in loving-kindneſs, and in mercies. I will even be-"troth thee unto me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know "the Lord." The "everlaſting covenant," wherein God becomes the God of ſinners of all ſorts and nations without difference, is, as the covenant with Iſrael after the fleſh, compared to a marriage-contract. And the apoſtle tells us, that God becomes our God in this new covenant when he juſtifies us by faith, Rom. iii. 29. 30. "Is he the God of "the Jews only? Is he not alſo of the Gentiles? Yes, of the "Gentiles alſo: ſeeing it is one God which ſhall juſtify the "circumciſion by faith, and uncircumciſion through faith." And when God in this manner betroths us to himſelf; then we know him, beholding the glory of his *juſtice*, his *mercy*, and *faithfulneſs*, whereby he diſtinguiſhes himſelf to us, as the true God, from all idols; even as he ſpake by Iſaiah, chap. xlv. 20. 21. 22. "They have no knowledge that — "pray unto a God that cannot ſave.——There is no God "elſe beſide me, a JUST God and a SAVIOUR, there is "none beſide me. Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all "the ends of the earth." And he ſpake alſo of the knowledge of this ſame glory by Jeremiah, chap. ix. 24. "But "let

" let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtand-
" eth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſe
" loving-kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth:
" for in theſe I delight, ſaith the Lord." And theſe are the ſame divine perfections that we ſee often celebrated in the Pſalms, as Pſal. lxxxv. 9. 10. 11. " Surely his ſalvation is
" nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our
" land. Mercy and truth are met together; juſtice and
" peace have kiſſed. Truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth;
" and juſtice ſhall look down from heaven." Pſal. lxxxix. 14. " Juſtice and judgment the habitation of thy throne:
" mercy and truth ſhall go before thy face." Pſal. xcviii. 2. 3. " The Lord hath made known his ſalvation. His ju-
" ſtice hath he openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen.
" He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the
" houſe of Iſrael. All the ends of the earth have ſeen the
" ſalvation of our God." Pſal. ci. 1. " I will ſing of mercy
" and of judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing." Pſal. cxvi. 5. " Gracious is the Lord, and righteous: yea, our
" God is merciful"

This is the glory of God that appears to our minds in Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, ſent to be the propitiation for our ſins: 1 John iv. 8 9. 10 — " God is love. In this
" was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that
" God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we
" might live through him. Herein is love, not that we
" loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son the
" propitiation for our ſins." He that " purged our ſins by
" himſelf," is that great high prieſt who has ſtood up with Urim and Thummim.

He gives, in his goſpel, the anſwer to that grand queſtion, of the utmoſt concern to ſinful men, " Wherewith
" will the Lord be pleaſed?" or, " What ſhall I give for
" the ſin of my ſoul?" He tells the truth that he heard from the Father, That " he is well pleaſed in him his be-
" loved Son." And when we hear this from him, we behold the glory of the divine *mercy* and *juſtice*, or of the divine *love* manifeſted with its *jealouſy* to us ſinners, by that truth which he declares: and ſo we ſee the " brightneſs of glory" in him who " purged our ſins by himſelf," and " ſat
" down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high." Thus we know the Lord, we know his name, and know aſſuredly that this is the word of the Lord; even as the inquirer in the judgment of Urim knew that the anſwer the prieſt made to

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his queſtion was the Lord's anſwer, by the glory of the Lord ſhining on his breaſt-plate.

The apoſtle, in that paſſage where he makes the glory ſhining in the "face of Moſes," a figure of the glory ſhining in the "face of Jeſus Chriſt" to the minds of believers, refers alſo to the Urim and Thummim, which the LXX. (much uſed by the writers of the New Teſtament) had rendered *manifeſtation* and *truth*, when he ſays, —— "By "manifeſtation of the truth, commending ourſelves to e-"very man's conſcience in the ſight of God. But if our "goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them "which believe not, leſt the light of the goſpel of the "glory of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine "unto them. For we preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt "Jeſus the Lord," 2 Cor. iv. 2. 3. 4. 5. Thoſe muſt be ignorant of the truth of the goſpel, whoſe minds perceive not the ſhining of the glory of Chriſt, who is the image of God; even as they could not have the Lord's anſwer by Urim, who ſaw not the ſhinings of the Lord's glory in the breaſt-plate of the ephod. But this appearance of the divine glory in Jeſus Chriſt, to them who hear this great high prieſt, gives them full aſſurance of the truth of the whole New-teſtament revelation made by him; by whom it "began to be ſpoken" on earth, in the days of his fleſh, and who, when he aſcended into heaven, ſpake it from thence by the miniſtry of his twelve apoſtles, who "preach-"ed the goſpel with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from hea-"ven." And ſo, "upon his mouth," the whole church of the New Teſtament, even all the Iſrael of God, muſt "go "out and come in."

The twelve apoſtles are unto the church of the New Teſtament, as the twelve patriarchs, the ſons of Iſrael, were unto Iſrael after the fleſh, or the church of the Old Teſtament: for the ſpiritual Iſrael, who believe on Chriſt, through the word of his apoſtles, are born again of the incorruptible ſeed of the word which they preached; even as Iſrael after the fleſh was born of the ſeed of theſe twelve patriarchs, whoſe names were in the ſtones that filled the breaſt plate of judgment. Therefore the "new Jeruſalem" is repreſented to John in the viſion, as having twelve foundations, precious ſtones, "and in them the names of the "twelve apoſtles of the Lamb;" becauſe it is wholly built on their doctrine, Eph. ii. 20. 1 John iv. 6. And this is alſo

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the myſtery of the "crown of twelve ſtars" on the head of the woman, the true church, in oppoſition to the whore, or falſe church, in the Revelation. The apoſtles point out themſelves in their miniſtry as the true Urim, or twelve ſtones of the breaſt-plate ſhining, when they ſay, "By "manifeſtation of the truth, commending ourſelves to "every man's conſcience in the ſight of God;" and, 2 Cor. iv. 6. "God — hath ſhined in our hearts to the illumina- "tion of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face "of Jeſus Chriſt." So they are the Urim and Thummim. The light of the knowledge of the divine glory in the face of Chriſt ſhines to us in their goſpel, which we have now in the ſcriptures.

The TRUTH of the SCRIPTURES.

Obſerves on the Second Epiſtle of Peter.

Obſ. 1. THE apoſtle writes to Chriſtians, and deſcribes them, in diſtinction from other men, in this manner, —— "To them that have obtained like precious "faith with us, in the righteouſneſs of our God, and Sa- "viour Jeſus Chriſt:" Εν δικαιοσυνη του Θεου ημων, και σωτηρος Ιησου Χριστου.

"Faith — in the righteouſneſs of — Jeſus Chriſt." He diſtinguiſhes the faith of Chriſtians by its eſpecial object, *viz.* the righteouſneſs wrought by Jeſus Chriſt, finiſhed in his death, and rewarded in his reſurrection; which Chriſtians believe with the heart unto righteouſneſs, and confeſs with the mouth unto ſalvation, Rom. x. 8. 9. 10.

"The righteouſneſs of our God and Saviour." They who believe in his righteouſneſs, as did the apoſtles, look upon him as God: for he is as expreſsly called the God of Chriſtians here, where he is pointed out as the eſpecial object of their faith, as he is called their Lord, verſ. 11. where his kingdom is ſpoke of: "The kingdom of our "Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt:" Βασιλειαν του Κυριου ημων, και σωτηρος Ιησου Χριστου. Peter, and the other apoſtles, believed and confeſſed him to be the Son of God in the days of his fleſh, in oppoſition to thoſe Jews who were ready to acknowledge him as that great prophet, like Moſes, and to take him by force, and make him their king; but were offended

offended at his saying, he came down from heaven to give his flesh and blood for the life of the world, and so to give them eternal life. The Jews condemned him to death as a blasphemer, for calling himself the Son of God, so as to make himself God; and then triumphed in his death, as the decision of that great question on their side. And the disciples, whose faith had been shaken by his death, again triumphed in his resurrection, as the full decision of the question on the side of their faith, declaring him to be the Son of God with power. Therefore Thomas, when he was satisfied of the truth of his resurrection, said to him upon it, "My Lord, and my God." It is without controversy in the church of the living God, that "God was manifest "in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," 1 Tim. iii. 15. 16. For that church is "built upon this rock," Matth xvi. 16. 18. And as it is built on this rock, it is "the pillar and "stay of the truth," which is confirmed as well as most firmly believed in it. In that church, Jesus is called by this name, *Jehovah our righteousness*, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. xxiii. 6. And this name whereby she calls him, is her motto, by which she stands distinguished from all other societies, chap. xxxiii. 16. For this society consists of all them, and none other but them, who have obtained the like faith, in the righteousness of their God and Saviour Jesus Christ, that the apostles had.

"Who have obtained like precious faith with us." Here the apostle Peter places himself, as well as the other apostles, on a level with all Christians, as to this faith. Every Christian is not a chosen witness of Christ's resurrection, is not inspired to make the New-testament revelation; nor are all Christians endued with the gifts and powers that the apostles had for that purpose. Neither have they the keys of the kingdom of heaven given them, as Peter had, that by him God should open the door of faith, first to the circumcised, as Acts, chap. ii. and then to the uncircumcised, as chap. x. But as to this faith, every Christian is one with him, and with all the apostles. Every one of them obtains it the same way as Peter did, Matth. xvi. 17. "Blessed "art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not "revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." For they are "all taught of God," John vi. 44. 45; and they "all know him, from the least to the greatest," Heb. viii. 11. Whether we value this faith by what is believed, "the righteousness of our God and Saviour;" or by the ground

ground of belief, " the teſtimony of God," 1 Theſſ ii. 13.; or by its cauſe, and the way of obtaining it, as it is " the " gift of God" in the " behalf of Chriſt," and comes by divine teaching, Eph. ii. 8. Philip. i. 29.; or by its peculiar efficacy in us, conforming us to Jeſus Chriſt, eſpecially in " the work and labour of charity," verſ. 5. 6. 7. it is as valuable, as precious, and demands as much reſpect and honour from us in every Chriſtian, as in the apoſtle Peter.

II. The deſign of his writing to them is, that they may, after his deceaſe, have the things that were taught by the apoſtles always in remembrance: verſ. 15. " Moreover, I " will endeavour that you may be able, after my deceaſe, " to have theſe things always in remembrance." This he ſays in the foreſight of falſe teachers to ariſe: chap. ii. 1. " But there were falſe prophets alſo among the people, e- " ven as there ſhall be falſe teachers among you, who pri- " vily ſhall bring in damnable hereſies." He declares this to be the deſign of both his epiſtles, to keep in remembrance what the firſt Chriſtians heard from the apoſtles; and ſo bids them be mindful of the words of the prophets, and of the commandment of the apoſtles: chap. iii. 1. 2. " This " ſecond epiſtle, beloved, I now write unto you: in both " which I ſtir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; " that ye may be mindful of the words which were ſpoken " before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment " of us the apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour." And he commends the whole epiſtles of Paul, with the other ſcriptures, as the guard againſt ſeduction, notwithſtanding ſome things in them hard to be underſtood, and wreſted by thoſe who are not taught of God, nor ſtabliſhed in the faith: chap. iii. 15. 16. 17. — " Even as our beloved brother " Paul alſo, according to the wiſdom given unto him, hath " written unto you; as alſo in all his epiſtes, ſpeaking in " them of theſe things: in which are ſome things hard to " be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and un- " ſtable wreſt, as alſo the other ſcriptures, unto their own " deſtruction. Ye therefore, beloved, ſeeing ye know be- " fore, beware leſt ye alſo, being led away with the error " of the wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs."

This, if well conſidered, ſets unwritten tradition altogether aſide. The ſcriptures, containing " the words which " were ſpoken before by the holy prophets," and " the com- " mandment of the apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour," are

the only rule and ſtandard of Chriſtian faith and practice, after the deceaſe of the apoſtles; even as the ſcriptures of Moſes and the prophets were the only rule of religion for the Jews. And likeas the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament were kept by the Jews, and appealed to by the Lord and his apoſtles, as they had them in copies and tranſlations, in oppoſition to their univerſal tradition and corrupt interpretation of theſe ſcriptures; even ſo, the apoſtle here plainly ſuppoſes, that the ſcriptures of the apoſtles would be kept after their deceaſe among the profeſſors of Chriſtianity. And though he ſays, that theſe ſcriptures are liable alſo to be wreſted; yet, in the foreſight of prevailing and general ſeduction among profeſſed Chriſtians, he gives theſe ſame ſcriptures, in place of the deceaſed apoſtles, to preſerve true Chriſtians from being led away with the error of the wicked.

III. The things that the apoſtles taught, and then wrote, to be kept in remembrance among Chriſtians after their deceaſe, are moſt holy and divine. We may behold the purity and holineſs of the Chriſtian faith, in the things ſaid by the apoſtle, chap. i. 3.—11. "According as his di-" vine power hath given unto us all things that pertain un-" to life and godlineſs, through the knowledge of him " that hath called us by glory and virtue: whereby are gi-" ven unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that " by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature, ha-" ving eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through " luſt. And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your " faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to know-" ledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and " to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kind-" neſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity: for if theſe " things be in you, and abound, they make" you "neither " barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus " Chriſt. But he that lacketh theſe things, is blind, and " cannot ſee far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged " from his old ſins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give " diligence to make your calling and election ſure: for if " you do theſe things, you ſhall never fall: for ſo an en-" trance ſhall be miniſtered unto you abundantly, into the " everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. " Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in " remembrance of theſe things." So writes the Galilean " fiſher!

IV. The

IV. The apoſtles taught and wrote in the view of laying down their lives upon the truth of what they preached, and left in writing to keep it in remembrance after their death: verſ. 13. 14. 15. "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am "in this tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in re- "membrance: knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this ta- "bernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me. "Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able, after "my deceaſe, to have theſe things always in remem- "brance." When Peter was made a witneſs of the Lord's reſurrection, he ſhewed him what he was to expect by it in this world, when he ſignified to him by what death he ſhould glorify God, John xxi. 18. 19. And in the view of this he preached and wrote. It cannot be told what hope animated him, and the reſt of the apoſtles, to ſuffer as they did, beſides the hope of that ſame life and immortality that is brought to light by their teſtimony, concerning the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead. And ſo there is no reaſon to ſuſpect them of any deſign to impoſe on mankind. Impoſtors muſt have other views.

V. The truth of the things they taught, and have left on record in the ſcriptures, was manifeſt to their ſenſes in plain fact, of which they were eye-witneſſes. There is no appearance of their being conducted by philoſophy or politics in their teaching and writing. It goes all on fact, wherein they could not be deceived, and which they teſtified in the moſt ſimple manner: chap. i. 16. 17. 18. 19. "For we "have not followed cunningly deviſed fables, when we "made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord "Jeſus Chriſt, but were eye-witneſſes of his majeſty. For "he received from God the Father, honour and glory, "when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent "glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. "And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when "we were with him in the holy mount; and we have the "propheric word the more firm."

Here the apoſtle points out the great ſubject of the apoſtolic doctrine, *viz.* "their Lord Jeſus Chriſt his power and "coming." The word of prophecy foreſhewed the coming of the Meſſiah, or Chriſt, a glorious king, as the Jews acknowledged: for both Joſephus, the Jewiſh hiſtorian, and Tacitus, the Roman, give this expectation of the Jews as one of the cauſes of their rebellion againſt the Romans, and of that war which iſſued in the deſtruction of their city

and temple, and the diſperſion of their nation. But the queſtion betwixt them and the apoſtles was, If the Meſſiah was then come? The apoſtles teſtified he was come in Jeſus. And whereas the weakneſs of his appearance, eſpecially as crucified, was objected as perfectly inconſiſtent with the notion the Jews had of the power of that Meſſiah foretold by their prophets; the apoſtles declared his power, as heavenly, and as the power of an endleſs life, by his reſurrection from the dead, whereof they were witneſſes; by which alſo they made known his glorious ſecond coming, ſitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

And here Peter puts Chriſtians in mind of a notable revelation, and a fact, manifeſting the truth of the power and coming of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to which he and two other apoſtles were witneſſes. This is that glorious revelation on the mount, (Matth. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 2. and Luke ix. 28.); where Jeſus was transfigured before them; where they ſaw that ancient ſymbol of the divine preſence, "the "bright cloud, the excellent glory," from whence they heard the "Father's voice," ſaying to them of Jeſus, — "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; "hear ye him;" and ſaw Moſes the lawgiver, and Elias that great prophet, "appearing in glory;" and heard them "talking with him," and ſpeaking of his deceaſe, which "he ſhould accompliſh at Jeruſalem;" while they beheld in Jeſus the prelude to that glory which ſhould follow his ſufferings, or the pledge or foretaſte of the glory into which he ſhould enter after that deceaſe. Thus they ſaw that ſame "glory of the Lord" that appeared to Moſes and the prophets of old. And whereas there was the likeneſs of a man, or "the likeneſs as the appearance of a man," converſing "face to face" with Moſes, when the glory of the Lord appeared to him, even as Ezekiel (chap. i. 26.) deſcribes "the appearance of the likeneſs of the glory of the "Lord;" the apoſtles ſaw the real man Jeſus appearing in that ſame glory, heard him glorified, even with reſpect to his death, by the "Father's voice;" and ſaw Moſes, who of old converſed with him in a figure, and Elias, who was caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire, both of them attending upon him, and talking with him of that very ſubject which was the great ſtumbling-block to the Jews, who were offended in that wherein the "Father is well pleaſed," even his beloved Son's *deceaſe*, which the prophets foretold he would "accompliſh at Jeruſalem."

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So they "were eye-witneſſes of his majeſty," as that great Meſſiah foretold by the prophets and Moſes, even the "Son of God."

And they heard him, whom the Jews deſpiſed, "honoured "and glorified" by the Father's voice from heaven, teſtifying the ſum of the goſpel of the glory of Chriſt that they preached.

And ſo they "had the prophetic word" in the ſcriptures of Moſes and the prophets *confirmed* to them.

For the apoſtle is far from ſaying here, that any revelation to Moſes, or to any prophet of the Old Teſtament, is more firm or ſure than that which they ſaw and heard on the holy mount. On the contrary, he is ſaying, that this revelation confirms and eſtabliſhes all the old revelations to Moſes and the prophets: for here the *Father's voice* applies them to *Jeſus*, with the concurrence of Moſes and Elias. And the voice commands the apoſtles to *hear him* with whom they are left *alone*. Thus we may ſee the Old-teſtament revelation iſſuing in Jeſus the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleaſed; and the revelation of the New Teſtament, which is the ſpirit of the Old, flowing from him: Και εχομεν βεβαιοτερον τον προφητικον λογον: "And we have more "firm the prophetic word." They had it more eſtabliſhed and confirmed to them by that notable diſcovery of the glory following the ſufferings of Jeſus, as the verification of all the grand things that Moſes and the prophets ſpake of the Meſſiah: for this is the ſubſtance of what the prophetic word ſaid of him, "The ſufferings of Chriſt, "and the following glory," 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12.

VI. The truth of what the apoſtles teſtified and wrote, concerning the power and coming of Chriſt, appears by this, that it eſtabliſhes and confirms the prophetic word of the Old Teſtament; which, after all the evidence of its coming from God, was to be verified, and ſo further confirmed in its accompliſhment. And as, without this accompliſhment in *Jeſus*, it can have no eſtabliſhed ſenſe, and is not verified by any event; ſo, being thus fulfilled, it is a moſt firm proof of the truth concerning the power and coming of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which was foretold in this prophetic word, and which the apoſtles have made known in their ſcriptures according to it. Therefore the apoſtle tells Chriſtians, they do well to take heed to the prophetic word; deſcribes, by a fit ſimilitude, how it ſhewed beforehand Chriſt's power and coming, and how the New-teſtament revelation excels it; and directs them to follow only

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the guidance of the New Teſtament in the interpretation of it: chap. i. 19. 20. 21. "And we have the prophetic word "more firm, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as "unto a light ſhining in a dark place, until the day ſhould "dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts: knowing "this firſt, that no prophecy of the ſcripture is of any pri-"vate interpretation. For prophecy came not in old time "by the will of man; but holy men of God ſpake, moved "by the Holy Ghoſt."

The apoſtle recommends the Old-teſtament ſcripture to Chriſtians, and commends them for taking heed to it, as they were doing. For, though they rejected the Jewiſh traditions, they ſhewed the greateſt regard to the writings of Moſes and the prophets, that the Jews held as inſpired. The apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians looked on all theſe as given by divine inſpiration, and took heed to them as the word of God. Our Lord and his apoſtles appealed conſtantly to theſe ſcriptures, as the word of God, againſt the Jewiſh tradition. And ſee how Paul commends them to Timothy, 2 Tim. iii. 15. 16. 17.

The firſt Chriſtians took heed to Old-teſtament ſcripture as a prophetic word, having its accompliſhment in the power and coming of their Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as it was made known to them by the apoſtles. They found that word confirmed to them in the ſufferings of Chriſt and the following glory, reported by the apoſtles, who preached the goſpel to them, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven. And they looked on the Old Teſtament as a parable; and on the New, as the ſenſe of that parable, or as the ſpirit of the letter in the parable.

They conſidered the divine revelation in Old-teſtament ſcripture, by the direction of the apoſtles, as a light in an obſcure corner, ſhewing, but darkly and indiſtinctly, the ſame very things that are more plainly, and clearly, and more univerſally, manifeſted in the New-teſtament revelation; which, compared with it, is as the dawning day and day-ſtar. They beheld that old revelation, as referring to a more clear and open revelation that was to come; which they found in the report brought them by the apoſtles: for they "took heed" to that prophetic word, "as to a "light ſhining in a dark place, until the day ſhould dawn." And it confirmed both theſe revelations to them at once, when they perceived the things that are clearly diſcovered by the new revelation, to be the ſame that had been ſhewed before more darkly by the old.

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By the New-teſtament revelation, they were made to know in their *hearts* the things that were foreſhewed by the prophetic word. For, as they believed the goſpel, they beheld the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; they found the power of his kingdom in their hearts, where his laws were written; and, having the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, the earneſt of the heavenly inheritance, their hearts had a begun experience of the glory following the ſufferings of Chriſt. And ſo, by the goſpel-revelation, as "the day-ſtar "ariſing in their hearts," they knew in themſelves the accompliſhment of the word of prophecy; very different indeed from that which the Jews looked for, according to the *letter* of that word; but far more glorious, and perfectly agreeable to the *ſpirit* of it. If we believe not in Chriſt crucified, ſo as to be "crucified with him;" and if we believe not that he is alive from the dead, on the Father's right hand, ſo as to have him "dwelling in our hearts by "faith," and "living in us;" we cannot know the prophetic word concerning the ſufferings of Chriſt and the following glory, by reaſon of the blindneſs of our hearts as to the New-teſtament revelation, which illuſtrates and confirms that word, "as the day-ſtar ariſing in the heart." For as God, who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhined into the hearts of the apoſtles, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Chriſt, ſo this knowledge is communicated to the hearts of men by their teaching; and we have it by hearing them, and in believing what they have written: while the God of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the goſpel of the glory of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them. See 2 Cor. iv. 2.—6.

Now, while the apoſtle commends Chriſtians for taking heed to the Old-teſtament revelation in this view of it, he lays down this to them as a firſt principle for underſtanding it, "That no prophecy of the ſcripture is of any private interpretation." For as the "prophecy came not by the will "of man," it cannot be underſtood as man pleaſes, but according to the interpretation that God himſelf, its author, gives it in the New-teſtament revelation, agreeably to that notable diſcovery of the great ſcope of Moſes and the prophets that Peter was witneſs to on the holy mount. And, according to that, the New-teſtament revelation, that we have from Jeſus Chriſt by his apoſtles in the apoſtolic ſcriptures, is the only public authentic comment on Moſes

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and the prophets. And every interpretation that is not agreeable to that, but according to the will of man, like the interpretation that the church of the Jews gave the Old Teſtament, and that was eſtabliſhed among them by tradition, is but private interpretation. Yea, though all the teachers that have been among Chriſtians ſince the deceaſe of the apoſtles, and all the churches upon earth, ſhould agree to interpret any prophecy of the Old Teſtament otherwiſe than by the things which the Holy Ghoſt, the author of the prophecy, hath revealed in the New Teſtament; it would ſtill be but a private interpretation. For the apoſtle is not here oppoſing a private interpretation unto any interpretation authoriſed by teachers prevailing among Chriſtians after his deceaſe, and followed by the multitude of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; but "private interpretation" ſtands here oppoſed to the Holy Ghoſt's interpretation of his word of prophecy, in the New-teſtament revelation, which is here compared to the "dawning day and day-ſtar," in diſtinction from the Old-teſtament revelation, compared "to a light ſhining in a dark place." And ſo the apoſtle Peter makes every interpretation of any prophecy of Old-teſtament ſcripture, that is not authoriſed in the New Teſtament by the Holy Ghoſt, who inſpired the prophets, to be a private interpretation.

By what immediately follows, concerning "falſe teachers" among Chriſtians, it would appear, that he ſpeaks againſt this private interpretation, in the view of theſe teachers to ariſe after his deceaſe; and inſinuates, that they would corrupt the profeſſion of Chriſtianity by an interpretation of ſome prophecies of the old ſcripture, for which they had no authority from the Holy Ghoſt in the New Teſtament. And accordingly it is fact, that, after the deceaſe of the apoſtles, there have been, and ſtill are teachers among Chriſtians, much followed, who have applied prophecies of the ſcripture to a ſort of worldly power, and coming of Chriſt, that was not made known to Chriſtians by the apoſtles. Theſe teachers have interpreted the prophetic word very diſagreeably to that conformity to Jeſus Chriſt in his ſufferings in this life, and in the following heavenly glory of his reſurrection in the life to come; unto which his whole church is predeſtinated, and which the apoſtles made known to Chriſtians as the ſenſe and ſcope of the prophetic word. And, by virtue of this "private interpretation," theſe teachers, not being inclined to ſuffer with

with Chriſt in this life, nor to wait patiently for reigning with him in the life to come, have got to themſelves a kingdom and dominion in this world, which they call, and their many followers believe to be, the kingdom of Chriſt. Of this, they muſt own, Jeſus Chriſt and his apoſtles had indeed no occaſion to ſpeak in their day: but they are ſo confident of its being foretold by the prophets, that they are ready to charge any one that denies it, with denying the authority of the Old Teſtament. Yet this private interpretation, and the kingdom of the clergy built upon it, had never taken place among Chriſtians, if they had been always attentive to this warning of the apoſtle Peter, with reſpect to the interpretation of the prophetic word which he ſaw confirmed on the holy mount, even the warning he here gives againſt his pretended ſucceſſors. But the apoſtolic ſcriptures behoved to be fulfilled.

VII. The prophecy of New-teſtament ſcripture, concerning the profeſſion of Chriſtianity in the world after the deceaſe of the apoſtles, as it is now manifeſtly confirmed by the event, is a proof of the truth of theſe things, that the apoſtles declared, and left in writing to be kept in remembrance, concerning the power and coming of Chriſt.

New-teſtament ſcripture foretells a general apoſtaſy from that holy faith in the righteouſneſs of our God and Saviour, the faith once delivered to the ſaints; a prevailing denial of the power of Chriſtianity under a form of it, and a grand oppoſition to Chriſt in the name of Chriſt. For the antichriſt whoſe coming is foreſhewed in the writings of the apoſtles, oppoſes himſelf to Chriſt, exalting himſelf in Chriſt's name.

The Lord pointed to this, when foretelling the ſigns that ſhould go before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; and in connection with that alſo, the ſigns of his ſecond coming to judgment, Matth. xxiv. 11. 12. 13. 23. 24. 25. And Paul foretells this in his epiſtles, 2 Theſſ. ch. ii. 1 Tim. iv. 1.—6. and 2 Tim. ch. iii. So does John in his epiſtles, 1 epiſt. ii. 18.—26. iv. 1.——6. and 2 epiſt. verſ. 6.——10. and in the Apocalypſe. The ſame thing is here foretold by Peter: and Jude ſpeaks of it, in his epiſtle, almoſt in the ſame words with him.

In the epiſtles of Peter and Jude, the antichriſtian apoſtaſy is compared to that of the angels who ſinned, and kept not their beginning, but left their own habitation; to that of the old world, the world of the ungodly, upon which the

flood came; and to that of the people saved out of the land of Egypt, who were afterward destroyed, except Caleb and Joshua. And in midst of this general apostasy, true Christians are represented as Noah and his family in the old world, and as *just* Lot in Sodom vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.

This apostasy is to continue and last till the day of judgment, and till "the Lord come," according to Enoch's prophecy, "among his holy myriads, to execute judgment "upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among "them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have un- "godly committed; and of all their hard speeches, which "ungodly sinners have spoken against him." For though Paul says, "the Lord will consume" that man of sin "with "the spirit of his mouth;" yet he tells us, it is "with the "brightness of his coming" that he is to be "destroyed;" even that same second coming of which he speaks in that passage. The judgment of God to be executed against this apostasy, in that great day, when the apostasy of the angels is to be punished, (Matth. xxv. 41.——45.), is set forth by Peter and Jude as most dreadful; fit to be prefigured by the destruction of the old world, by the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and by the perdition of Korah and his company.

The teachers among Christians are pointed out as the leaders in this apostasy from the power of Christianity, under a form of it. They are represented as speaking great swellings of vanity, concerning the knowledge of the way of righteousness, and feigned words of the Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* as their Redeemer; while yet they "deny the "Master that bought them:" not indeed directly; for "they privily bring in their heresies" to the Christian profession, changing the truth into a *lie:* but they in effect deny his redemption, and justification by his blood, by teaching men how to go about to establish their own righteousness in the Redeemer's name; denying that his blood can save them without the methods of becoming righteous that they prescribe to them. They deny the *Master* Redeemer, exalting themselves as masters in that kingdom of this world, where they exercise authority in *Christ*'s name, having the people of the nations subjected to them, by the power of the kings of the earth given to them, as Christ's representatives on earth; in plain contradiction to his testimony, "My kingdom is not of this world. —— For this cause came

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" I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the " truth: every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice." And while they lord over the people, and ſtrive for the maſtery in the nations of this world, they deny that Maſter who ſaid, " So ſhall it not be among you; but whoſoever will " be great among you, ſhall be your ſervant;" and, " If " any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and " take up his croſs and follow me." They deny him by departing from his holy commandment of brotherly love, among them that are of the truth, for the truth's ſake; as it ſtands in oppoſition to the love of the world, and of all that is in the world, even the luſt of the fleſh, and the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life.

While they deny him by turning from his holy commandment, allowing the multitude of their ſubjects and followers liberty from his yoke, which they cannot bear; they themſelves are ſervants to the corruption that is in the world through luſt.

They ſerve the luſt of covetouſneſs:—" Through cove- " touſneſs ſhall they, with feigned words, make merchan- " diſe of you.—An heart they have exerciſed with co- " vetous practices: curſed children, which have forſaken " the right way, and have gone aſtray, following the way " of Balaam the ſon of Boſor, who loved the wages of un- " righteouſneſs."

They ſerve the luſt of the fleſh:—" Chiefly them that " walk after the fleſh in the luſt of uncleanneſs.—Having " eyes full of adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from ſin.— " Turning the grace of our God into laſciviouſneſs.— " Theſe filthy dreamers defile the fleſh." And theſe muſt be chiefly they to whom that character of antichriſt applies, 1 Tim. iv. 3. " FORBIDDING TO MARRY." For this is the commandment of the Lord, 1 Cor. vii. 1. 2. It is " good " for a man not to touch a woman. But, for avoiding " fornications, let every man have his own wife, and " let every woman have her own huſband;" and Heb xiii. 4. " Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: " but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

They are ſervants of the corruption that is in the world, through the luſt of pride and ambition. They " deſpiſe " dominion, and ſpeak evil of dignities." They " deſpiſe " government," are " preſumptuous, ſelf-willed; they are " not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities." They dare to " bring railing accuſation againſt them before the Lord."

Thus, being themſelves the ſervants of corruption, they entice many followers, by ſpeaking great ſwellings of vanity, leading to the admiration of mens perſons: and they entice them, by promiſing them a liberty, that the holy commandment allows not, to fulfil the luſts of the world, naming the name of the Redeemer from the world, and to walk after the courſe of this world, as much as if the way of righteouſneſs were not profeſſed by them, or as if the Redeemer's holy commandment had never been delivered to them. And indeed the nations of this world could never have been brought in ſubjection to them, as they have been, and ſome way ſtill are, upon any other terms.

There were falſe teachers among Chriſtians, from the beginning, preaching Chriſt in oppoſition to the apoſtles, perverting the goſpel, and ſtudying to ſet aſide the power of Chriſtianity under a form of it. And there were then ungodly men, who had crept in unawares into the churches of the ſaints among the profeſſors of the holy faith, who again went out from them, or ſeparated themſelves, in order to fulfil their luſts with more freedom than they could do amongſt them; or who were cut off by Chriſt's diſcipline. But theſe were only the forerunners of that antichriſt. And the work of all theſe firſt falſe teachers, perverting the goſpel, by turning it into a doctrine of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and corrupting the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, by accommodating it to the luſts of men, was but as a prelude to the work of thoſe teachers among Chriſtians who are the leaders in the grand apoſtaſy of *that antichriſt*.

Theſe teachers among Chriſtians are compared to Cain, as haters and perſecutors of the faithful; to Balaam, as running greedily after his error for reward; to Korah, as ſeeking the prieſthood, and gainſaying the everlaſting perfection that comes only by that one offering of Jeſus Chriſt; and to the "falſe prophets among the people" of "Iſrael," as leading God's peculiar people into an intercommunity of religion with the nations. For the Old Teſtament had types and figures of antichriſt as well as of Chriſt; and there is a "myſtery of iniquity," as well as a "myſtery of godlineſs." And theſe antichriſtian teachers have been ſeen, in their worldly kingdom which they call Chriſtian, aping the prophets in God's kingdom of Iſrael; in place of which they would have their kingdom to be now come.

Peter foretells, that, by reaſon of theſe teachers, and the "many following their ways," and paſſing for the Chriſtian

ſtian teachers and people, true Chriſtianity would be reproached, and all their ways laid to its charge by infidels: chap. ii. 2. "And many ſhall follow their pernicious ways, by "reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall be evil ſpoken of." And he likewiſe plainly points at a ſet of infidels in the laſt days, calling themſelves Chriſtians in ſport, and oppoſing the truth concerning the power and coming of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by mockery and ridicule: chap. iii. 3. "There "ſhall come in the laſt days ſcoffers, walking after their "own luſts, and ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his co-"ming?"

If we can diſtinguiſh the apoſtolic Chriſtianity, the "way of truth" clearly pointed out in the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, from the ways of teachers that have come after them among the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; and if we can but ſee the events that have come out ſo manifeſtly, according to the prediction, and that are before our eyes every where in the world called Chriſtian: then we have the truth of what the apoſtles declared and have written of the power and coming of Chriſt, evidently ſet before us. And every thing in the *Chriſtian world*, that ſerves as a fund of reproach to infidels againſt the way of truth, will be to us a confirmation of it.

The Conversion of the Jews.

Rom. chap. xi.

FROM the beginning of this chapter, the apoſtle vindicates God from the charge of "caſting away his "people," in the rejection of the Jewiſh church and nation. And he ſays, that God had not, in that rejection, "caſt "away his people which he foreknew," (verſ. 1. 2.); but that there was, as in the time of Elias, even at that preſent time, "a remnant according to the election of grace;" and therefore not "of works," verſ. 5. 6. And ſo, while Iſrael obtained not that which he ſought for, "the election "obtained it; and the reſt" (who were not of that election) "were blinded," (verſ. 7.—10.), as was foretold in the Old Teſtament, by Iſaiah, chap. xxix. 10. and vi. 9. and by David, Pſal. lxix. 22. 23.

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The objection againſt the providence of the Sovereign Lord God, with reſpect to the *blinded*, imported in that queſtion, " Have they ſtumbled that they ſhould fall?" is anſwered by the apoſtle thus: " Far be it; but, through their " fall, ſalvation to the nations," verſ. 11. Their ruin was not the great thing deſigned by their ſtumbling. God had a higher end in it, ſuitable to his goodneſs and mercy, *viz.* the ſalvation of the nations. Even as the deſtruction of the veſſels of wrath (Rom. chap. ix.) is not the great end of their being fitted to deſtruction; but the ſhewing forth of the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, is that end to which the deſtruction of the veſſels of wrath is ſubſervient. And we cannot be ſurpriſed at this, if we acknowledge the goodneſs of God in clothing and feeding us daily, by the deſtruction of the beaſts his creatures, even as they alſo are made for food to one another; and if we conſider that benefits are frequently handed to us, in the courſe of providence, by the loſſes of other men. Yea, if we be pleaſed with the manifeſtation of the riches of his glory in the veſſels of mercy, we can bear with the deſtruction of the veſſels of wrath, as we do with the ſhade in a fine picture.

The apoſtle ſays, ſalvation is come to the nations, " to " provoke them (the Jews) to jealouſy," verſ. 11. And he takes this from Moſes, Deut. xxxii. 21. which he had cited before, chap. x. 19. And upon this he founds his following diſcourſe to the nations, concerning the rejected Jews. " Now," ſays he, " if the fall of them (that ſtumbled) " be the riches of the world, and the deficiency of them " the riches of the nations; how much more the fulneſs of " them?" verſ. 12. He addreſſes this diſcourſe to the nations, as their apoſtle, and tells them his end and deſign in ſpeaking thus, with reſpect to the Jews, in theſe words: " If by any means I may provoke to jealouſy my fleſh, and " might ſave ſome of them." And, upon this deſign, he proceeds in this way of ſpeaking of them to the nations, " If the caſting away of them be the reconciling of the " world; what the receiving, but life from the dead?" The apoſtle of the nations being a Jew, and having a moſt fervent deſire for the converſion of his brethren according to the fleſh, extols the benefit that came to the nations by their fall: and, if ſo much good came out of their fall, he ſpeaks of this recovery, which he ardently wiſhes, as a thing that would be inexpreſſibly great and glorious beyond imagination. And he draws the poſſibility of it (ſo far, at leaſt,

as

as to encourage his declared deſign, which was, " to ſave " ſome of them)" from what Moſes ſaid of " provoking " them to jealouſy," or emulation.

In purſuit of this deſign, he ſays further, " For if the " firſt fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy: and if the " root be holy, ſo are the branches," verſ. 16 Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, were ſeparated unto God for the ſake of Chriſt, that *ſeed*, to ſpring of them, and bleſs all nations: and their fleſhly ſeed, the whole houſe of Iſrael, was alſo ſeparated to God through Chriſt to come of them, and by virtue of their fleſhly relation to him, as the ſeed promiſed to their fathers; even as the lump is holy by the holineſs of the firſt fruits. And ſeeing Iſrael after the fleſh became a people and nation, by virtue of the promiſe of Chriſt to their fathers, as their ſeed; Chriſt, that *ſeed*, as he ſtood in that promiſe, was the root from whence they grew: and ſo they were a holy nation, and peculiar people unto God, according to their natural and fleſhly connection with that root. This is that ſame root into which (as ſtanding in the accompliſhment of that promiſe) the nations, who were not of the ſtock of Iſrael, are graffed, according to the promiſe to Abraham, " In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth " be bleſſed, Gen. xxii. 18. Eph. iii. 6.

But, upon this, the ingraffed nations might take occaſion to boaſt and glory over the rejected Iſrael, and ſay, " They " were holy, it is true, as they grew from that root, and " ſtood in it; but now Chriſt, the promiſed ſeed, being " come to bleſs the nations according to the promiſe, the " peculiar relation they had to him, while the promiſe was " not performed, is diſſolved; and theſe branches that grew " firſt from that promiſe, are broken off, that we might be " graffed in: and ſo we ſtand in that root; and they have " no more connection with it, as they once had, being now " broken off." " If ſome of the branches be broken off," verſ. 17.; and, " Thou wilt ſay then, The branches were " broken off, that I might be graffed in," verſ. 19.; " and " thou ſtandeſt," verſ. 20.

The apoſtle grants this, and owns, that they were broken off; and that this was in order to the ingraffing of the nations. But he ſhews the nations, that they had no ground of boaſting againſt the Jews in this. For, firſt, he puts them in mind, that they were not the natural branches of this holy root, but, as it were, taken out of the wild olive, and planted into the true good olive-tree, (Jer. xi. 16.),

from

from which the Jews grew naturally. And, next, he lets them know, that if God ſpared not theſe natural branches, but broke them off, becauſe of unbelief, when they could no more have a place in the root but by faith, now that the promiſed ſeed was come to bleſs the nations through faith; then certainly the ingraffed nations had no ground to think that they could ſtand in that root, if they continued not in the faith. And further, he ſhews them, that as their being and continuing in that root was wholly owing to the divine goodneſs and grace, they ſhould alſo be cut off, if they continued not in that goodneſs; even as, on the other hand, they who were broken off ſhould be again graffed in, if they remained not in unbelief, verſ. 17.—23.

And he ſtill inſiſts on the poſſibility of their being graffed in again, ſo as to make void the boaſting of the ingraffed nations againſt them: for he ſays, "God is able to graff "them in again." Yea, he ſhews it much more credible, that the Jews, as the natural branches, ſhould be again graffed into their own olive-tree, than that the nations, as the branches of the wild olive, ſhould be cut out of that tree which is wild by nature, and be graffed contrary to nature into that good olive-tree, whereof the Jews were the natural branches. By this ſimilitude he ſhews the poſſibility of that which he earneſtly wiſhed, *viz.* that the rejected Jews, whoſe caſe might ſeem hopeleſs to the believing nations, ſhould yet be ſaved by faith in their own Meſſiah, to whom they had a natural relation; as well as the nations, who had no natural relation to him, and once lay at the greateſt diſtance from ſalvation through him, are now ſaved by faith in him, verſ. 23. 24.

However earneſtly Paul deſired the converſion and ſalvation of all the Jews, as a thing no leſs poſſible with God than the converſion of the Gentiles; yet hitherto he aſſerts not, that it ſhall be as he deſired. For all that he could propoſe for the Jews, by his diſcourſe of them to the nations, was, "by any means to ſave ſome of them," *i. e.* thoſe who belonged to the "election of grace," who were yet among the unbelieving Jews; of whom he ſays, verſ. 28 "As touching the election," they are "beloved for the "fathers ſakes." And here he ſays of the branches that were broken off, they ſhall be graffed in, if they bide not ſtill in unbelief; even as he ſaid, the ingraffed nations ſhould be cut off, if they continued not in God's goodneſs. And this brings to mind a paſſage that may be compared with this:

this: John xxi. 22. 23. " Jeſus ſaith unto him, If I will " that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow " thou me. Then went this ſaying abroad among the bre- " thren, that that diſciple ſhould not die: yet Jeſus ſaid " not unto him, He ſhall not die: but, If I will that he tarry " till I come, what is that to thee?" In like manner, upon what the apoſtle here writes, this ſaying has gone abroad among Chriſtians, that the nation of the Jews, or the bulk of that people, once cut off from Chriſt, ſhall, ſome time before the end, be graffed into him again: yet the apoſtle writes not this; but, " They alſo, if they bide not ſtill in " unbelief, ſhall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them " in again."

But what follows, verſ. 25. 26. 27. is moſtly inſiſted on for a national converſion of the Jews, who were nationally rejected, or for ſuch a great converſion of that people, before the coming of Chriſt to judgment, as that the number of the converted ſhall be, in proportion to the reſt, as the number of the rejected was to the converted in the days of the apoſtles. The apoſtle's words are, — " For I would not, " brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery, " (leſt ye ſhould be wiſe in your own conceits), that blind- " neſs in part is happened to Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the " nations be come in; and ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved: as " it is written, There ſhall come out of Zion the deliverer, " and ſhall turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob. For this " is my covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their " ſins."

It appears from Rev. i. 20. and xvii. 7.—12. 15. 18. that the word *myſtery* is uſed in ſcripture to ſignify the hidden ſenſe of a figure. Thus, when our Lord is declaring to his diſciples the ſenſe and meaning of his parables, concerning the kingdom of heaven, that lay, under the figures, hid from the multitude, he ſays, Matth. xiii. 11. " It is given unto you to know the myſteries of the king- " dom of heaven; but to them it is not given." And thus the goſpel is called " the myſtery", and " the revelation " of the myſtery, which was kept ſecret ſince the world " began," becauſe it lays open the ſenſe and meaning of the types of the Old Teſtament; and the truth that the apoſtles declared, is the ſenſe that lay hid under all the prophetical figures, ſhewing beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt and the following glory. The union of Chriſt and the church, is the myſtery of the union of Adam and his wife

Eve, Eph. v. 30. 31. 32. The changing of all Christ's people that are alive and remain to his coming, is the myſtery of the tranſlation of Enoch and Elias, 1 Cor. xv. 51. And indeed it will be hard to find a place in the New Teſtament, where the word *myſtery* muſt be taken in another ſenſe. This is alſo the common uſe of it in the writings of the Greek fathers of the firſt ages, when the Latins uſed for it the word *ſacrament*, as we have it ſtill in the vulgar Latin verſion, Rev. i. 20. and xvii. 7.

If this be the ſenſe of the word *myſtery* here, and if it be uſed in this text as it is every where elſe in the New Teſtament; the apoſtle muſt be here declaring the ſenſe of ſome figure. And we may eaſily ſee, at firſt view, the figure, *viz.* the Iſrael to which blindneſs happened in part; and likewiſe the ſenſe and meaning of that figure, *viz.* the Iſrael that ſhall all be ſaved; *i. e.* "the Iſrael of God," Gal. vi. 16. the ſpiritual ſeed of Iſrael and of Abraham, Rom. iv. 16. 17. Gal. iii. 29. We find the apoſtle likewiſe ſpeaking both of the typical and the true Iſrael, in the ſame verſe, Rom. ix. 6. "Not as though the word of God hath taken "none effect: for they are not all Iſrael which are of Iſ-"rael." And if by Jacob in the text which the apoſtle cites from Iſaiah, be meant only the Iſrael according to the fleſh, there is no myſtery in it: though, when it is literally underſtood, the contenders for a national converſion of the Jews, perhaps, would not chuſe it as the fitteſt text of the Old Teſtament for proving their point.

The apoſtle then ſeems to be declaring, that blindneſs in part has happened to the typical Iſrael, until the full number of the elect of every nation, or of the redeemed out of every nation, "(the nations of them which are ſaved," Rev. xxi. 24), be come in; and ſo, or in that manner (ουτω), ſhall all the true Iſrael of God be ſaved. And this myſtical ſpiritual Iſrael that ſhall be ſaved, is that part of Iſrael according to the fleſh that is not blinded, together with the full number of the redeemed out of every other nation of the world.

This text ſeems to import, what is like to be fact, that the fleſhly Iſrael, or the Jews, ſhall remain a people diſtinct from the nations till the end, or till the fulneſs of the redeemed out of every nation be come in; and that they ſhall not be wholly blinded, but ſome of them ſhall be ſharers of the mercy of the nations, even as other people. And the part of that Iſrael that is not utterly given up to blindneſs,

neſs, is beloved, according to the election, for the ſake of the promiſe made to their fathers, verſ. 28. The Jews that belong to the election, though now unbelievers, as the nations had been in times paſt, ſhall obtain mercy through the mercy of the nations, verſ. 29. 30. 31. For God hath ſhut up all together, both the elect Jews and nations, in unbelief, that the glory of his mercy might be manifeſted in the whole of them, without any room left to any of them, for glorying in their own merit, or boaſting againſt another. And this ſerves to humble the nations, and ſtain the pride of their glorying over the Jews, while it glorifies the divine grace in both; as the apoſtle ſays, "For God hath "concluded all" (them is put in by the tranſlators without "any foundation in the Greek text) "in unbelief, that he "might have mercy upon all," verſ. 32.

The apoſtle, having declared this way of God's mercy to the whole elect both of Jews and nations, or to the whole myſtical Iſrael, concludes his ſubject with an admiration of the deep wiſdom of God, as he purſues the deſign of manifeſting the glory of his ſovereign grace, in ways far beyond the reach of all created underſtanding. And he triumphs in the glory of the divine wiſdom and ſovereignty over all the pride of the ſons of men, in their own wiſdom and their own merit, v. 33.—36.

And this is what he writes to the converted nations, leſt they ſhould be wiſe in their own conceits, in glorying over the Jews, whoſe pride God had ſtained in ſhewing mercy to them; and leſt they ſhould become high-minded, as the Jews were, in oppoſition to mercy and grace; and ſo be cut off, as well as they. But if we would know the whole of this myſtery, of which the apoſtle would not have the Romans ignorant, as ſerving to keep them from being high-minded; we muſt conſider, that the fleſhly Iſrael was not only the type and figure of the ſpiritual Iſrael that ſhall be all ſaved, but likewiſe the example of the profeſſion of the goſpel, and the outward appearance of the ſpiritual Iſrael in the world, according to the call of the goſpel; as to which the apoſtle had ſaid, (verſ. 28.), the blinded Jews were enemies for the ſake of the nations. "Many are called, but "few choſen." And we ſee from 1 Cor. chap. x. and Heb. chap. iii. & iv. that the unbelieving Iſraelites, who fell in the wilderneſs, and came ſhort of the promiſed reſt in Canaan's land, were examples of the profeſſors of the goſpel coming ſhort of the promiſe of the heavenly reſt through

unbelief. Now, we know that none of the true Iſrael can periſh, or be utterly cut off from Chriſt. But they may, who appear to be of them by the evangelical profeſſion; as the apoſtle ſhews us, 1 John ii. 18. 19. And unto ſuch the apoſtle Paul is here ſpeaking, as he ſignifies, that they may be cut off, in like manner as the Jews were.

Accordingly we find, that there has been a remarkable departure from the faith, and falling away from the primitive profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and that under the Chriſtian name. And in this there has been a remarkable imitation of the fleſhly Iſrael, in the things that Chriſt came in the fleſh to aboliſh; and likewiſe a remarkable pride, in oppoſition to the glory of God's grace, much like that of the Jews; and "a zeal of God" like theirs, who, "being ignorant "of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their "own righteouſneſs, ſubmitted not themſelves unto the "righteouſneſs of God," chap. x. 1.—4. The Roman church, to which the apoſtle here writes, came to be at the head of this falling-away. And in this, its antichriſtian ſtate, it is pointed out, Rev. xi. 8. as anſwering to the city "where our Lord was crucified." Here then we have the myſtery, of blindneſs in part happening to the typical Iſrael. For, *becauſe* the profeſſors of Chriſtianity "received not "the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved," God has ſent them "the energy of error, that they ſhould be-"lieve a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed "not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs," 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. 11. 12. And this blindneſs happened to them, profeſſing Chriſtianity, even as it did to the Jews before, profeſſing the hope of the promiſe made unto the fathers. But this blindneſs happened only in part. It could not hinder the ſalvation of thoſe among them whom God had, "from the beginning, choſen to ſalvation, through ſancti-"fication of the Spirit, and belief of the truth," verſ. 13. no more than the blindneſs that happened to the typical Iſrael, could hinder the ſalvation of "the remnant ac-"cording to the election of grace." Yea, though both the Jews and antichriſt will continue till all the elect be come in, or till the Lord's ſecond coming; yet both ſtand in a ſubſerviency to the ſalvation of the Iſrael of God; as they are both ſtanding evidences to the truth of the goſpel, even in their oppoſition to it; and as the preſervation of the oracles of God in the ſcriptures, the grand means of the ſalvation of God's elect, has been through them: while the

glory

glory of the Lord's ſovereign mercy ſhines, in calling his own elect, and ſaving them from among both the Jews and the Chriſtians, to whom blindneſs has happened after their example. The apoſtle would here have the Romans to know their fallibility, and to underſtand that they ſhould be far from thinking themſelves *infallible*. He ſhews them the danger they were in of becoming high-minded, againſt the faith, and againſt grace, and ſo of being blinded, and cut off, like the Jews. And he gives ſuch hints to them in this epiſtle, and ſuch directions in this and the following chapters, as, if duly attended and hearkened to, might have prevented the danger. See obſervations on the epiſtle to the Romans. But they have fulfilled the ſcripture againſt themſelves, as the Jews did before them.

Now, in all this view of the apoſtle's ſcope in this chapter, there appears not any thing like a national converſion of the Jews. And if we find it not here, we ſhall ſeek for it in vain in the prophecies of the Revelation, or in any other paſſage of the New Teſtament. They who inſiſt for it, muſt go to work in this manner with verſ. 25. 26. 27. They muſt ſay, that blindneſs in part has happened to the nation of the Jews, under which it is to remain, till that time when the nations ſhall all come in whole to Chriſt; and not ſome of the nations only, nor only a part and remnant of each nation, as in the days of the apoſtles; and then the whole nation of the Jews, and not the ſmaller part only, as in the time of the apoſtles, ſhall be ſaved: and that this is the ſenſe of Iſ. lix. 20. 21. where Jacob ſignifies the whole people of the Jews, and the "covenant with them," a ſpecial covenant with that nation; and the "Redeemer's coming" is neither his firſt nor ſecond coming declared in the New Teſtament, but ſome remarkable coming in the way of that ſpecial covenant with the Jews, before his ſecond appearing.

But ſuch a prevalency of true Chriſtianity in every nation, and among the Jews, before the end, is irreconcileable with Chriſt's ruling in the midſt of his enemies, till they be made his footſtool at his ſecond coming; and with the whole ſtrain of the New Teſtament, as well as the prophecies of the Revelation, repreſenting Chriſt's people hated of all nations for his name's ſake to the end, and plainly ſhewing that his church muſt be conformed to him in his humiliation in this world, till he appear to conform them to the glory of his reſurrection. And ſuch an abundance of faith in the nation of the Jews, and in all other nations, before

before the Lord's coming to judgment, cannot be made agree with the account given in the New Teſtament of the ſtate of the world, and of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, toward his coming: nor with what he ſaid, Luke xviii. 8. — "When the Son of man cometh, ſhall he find faith on the "earth?" But this notion of ſuch a prevalency of Chriſt's kingdom in this world, while his people remain in this mortal ſtate, appears to be but another edition of that old notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which the Jews oppoſed to Jeſus Chriſt and his heavenly kingdom, preached by him and his apoſtles. And it has ſerved to divert Chriſtians from the hope of the Lord's ſecond coming; and, in place of looking for that, made them put it far away.

As for Jacob, Iſ. lix. 20. it muſt be myſtical Jacob which is turned away from ungodineſs, and from which the Lord's Spirit and his words ſhall never depart. The "covenant "with them," who are turned from tranſgreſſion, and who have his Spirit and his words remaining ſtill with them, is only the new covenant in Chriſt's blood, through which all the Iſrael of God have the remiſſion of ſins, and not any peculiar covenant with the Jews. Yea, the apoſtle tells us, that the Jews, who belong to the election, muſt obtain mercy through the mercy of the nations; *i. e.* by the new covenant, by which whoſoever calls on the name of the Lord, ſhall be ſaved; and by the *Redeemer*'s firſt *coming* to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf, even his *coming* as the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth, without difference.

We may obſerve here, that the apoſtle ſeems to join two paſſages of Iſaiah together, as he did before, verſ. 8. For theſe words, "When I ſhall take away their ſins," are not found in Iſ. lix. 20. 21. But we have ſomething like them in Iſ. xxvii. 9. See the Greek verſion. And that is the paſſage from whence the apoſtle ſeems to take what he ſays of "breaking off the branches." For it is ſaid, Iſ. xxvii. 10. 11. "Yet the defenced city" ſhall be "deſolate, the ha-"bitation forſaken, and left like a wilderneſs: there ſhall "the calf feed, and there ſhall he lie down, and conſume "the branches thereof. When the boughs thereof are wi-"thered, they ſhall be broken off: the women come, and "ſet them on fire: for it is a people of no underſtanding: "therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on "them; and he that formed them, will ſhew them no fa-"vour." The apoſtle explains this by what he ſays of breaking

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ing off the natural branches, and not ſparing them, "be-
"cauſe of unbelief." They were a people of no under-
ſtanding: for, being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and
going about to eſtabliſh their own, they ſubmitted not
themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God: and therefore he
that formed them, ſhewed them no favour. When Iſaiah
propheſies this of Iſrael after the fleſh, he at the ſame time
foretells the taking away the ſins of the true Jacob, the Iſ-
rael of God; of whom he ſays, Iſ. xxvii. 6. "He ſhall
"cauſe them that come of Jacob, to take root: Iſrael
"ſhall bloſſom and bud, and fill the face of the world with
"fruit."

The Kingdom of Chriſt in the World.

MATTH. xii. 20.

A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench, till he ſend forth judgment unto victory.

THE prophecy of Iſaiah (chap. xlii. 1.—4.) concerning the Meſſiah's kingdom among the nations, is here applied to Jeſus, upon occaſion of his withdrawing from the Phariſees, ſeeking to deſtroy him, and his healing the multitudes that followed him, and charging them, "that they
"ſhould not make him known," verſ. 14. 15. 16.

When he withdrew from his enemies, he did not influence the multitudes that followed him, to ſtand in his defence. And they were not fit for that purpoſe. They were great multitudes indeed; but multitudes of ſick and infirm, that followed him for healing. Yea, when he healed them, in place of making himſelf formidable to his enemies, at the head of his multitudes, made ſtrong by almighty power, he forbade them to make him known. All the uſe he made of them, was, to ſhew the tenderneſs of his mercy, and manifeſt his ſaving power, in healing them. This was his influence upon the multitudes that followed him: he made uſe of his authority over them, not to diſtreſs his enemies, but to hinder them from making him known. And this he did, to prevent the multitude, expecting a ſecular Meſſiah, from being moved to take him by force, and make him ſuch a king as they were looking for: for when he perceived

ved them thus inclined, he withdrew from them alſo; and when they ſtill followed him, he took care to ſave them that labour, by undeceiving them, John, chap. vi.

The evangeliſt takes notice, verſ. 17. how agreeable this his behaviour is to the account Iſaiah gave of him, when propheſying of his kingdom among the nations. And ſo we may look on his behaviour at this time, as a repreſentation of his appearance as a king in this preſent world. He would not be the king of the Jewiſh nation, where he behoved to fix his throne, if his kingdom and dominion over the nations were of this world. But, according to this prophecy, the Spirit of God was to be upon him, for ſhewing judgment to the nations, that they might truſt in his name. The cures he did on the diſeaſed multitudes, were ſigns of that eternal ſalvation by the remiſſion of ſins, that miſerable ſinners of the nations were to truſt in him for. And his kingdom among the nations, when he ſhews judgment to them, and they truſt in his name, ſhall make no more noiſe and ſtir among the nations, nor appear any otherwiſe, than as he himſelf did among the Jews, when he did "not ſtrive, "nor cry, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreets."

A rod for a ſceptre, is the ſign of ſovereign power and dominion: Ezek. xix. 11.—"Strong rods for the ſceptres "of them that bear rule." Pſal. cx. 2. "The Lord ſhall "ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Zion: rule thou in "the midſt of thine enemies." The ſceptre of this kingdom is here called a *reed*. And we ſee the Roman ſoldiers, in deriſion to him, as pretending to a kingdom, putting a reed in his hand for a ſceptre, when they faſtened a thorny crown on his head. But the ſceptre of his kingdom is repreſented by the prophet as *a bruiſed reed*; the weakeſt of all rods for ſceptres of them that bear rule. Yet it is the rod of his ſtrength, whoſe power is manifeſted in preſerving this reed, bruiſed as it is in midſt of his enemies, from being broken. "He ſhall not be diſcouraged," or broken, "till he have ſet judgment in the earth." And this is like the weakneſs of the preaching of Chriſt crucified, which the apoſtle declares to be the power of God to ſalvation, 1 Cor. i. 18. 22.—25.

A lamp is alſo the ſign of a kingdom. The kingdom of David is ſaid to be "a light," or lamp, "before God in Je-"ruſalem," 1 Kings xi. 36. and xv. 4. and 2 Kings viii. 19. And the Meſſiah's kingdom, prefigured by that, is propheſied of as *a lamp*, Pſal. cxxxii. 17. But this lamp is repreſent-

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ed by Isaiah, as burning dimly, and like a smoking flax, in all appearance, readier to die out, than give light. Yet it is the lamp ordained for him whose strength is made perfect in weakness; and he preserves it from being extinguished. "He shall not fail," or be darkened, "till he have set "judgment in the earth," or "till he send forth judg- "ment unto victory." The preaching of the cross, by which he "shewed judgment to the nations," was "fool- "ishness," in the view of the world and its wisest men; but to them that are called, it is "the wisdom of God." The truth that Christ came to testify, by which he proposed, before Pilate, to reign in the world, was as a lamp despised in the eyes of that Roman governor: yet it has outlived the mighty blaze of that great empire: nor will he let it be quenched, till all the kingdoms of the world be extinct.

Let us now observe, how Christ's kingdom in the world answers to these figures used by the prophet. And we may see this,

1. In the apostles, by whom he shewed judgment to the nations, when they were brought to trust in his name: 2 Cor. iv. 7.—11. "But we have this treasure in earthen ves- "sels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, "and not of us; troubled on every side, yet not distressed; "perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not for- "saken; cast down, but not destroyed," &c.

2. Jesus Christ may be seen, not breaking the bruised reed, nor quenching the smoking flax, by observing his first subjects and followers among the Jews and nations; to whom he shewed that tenderness of mercy and power to save, whereof he gave a sample, in healing the diseased multitudes that followed him in the days of his flesh. Behold him giving repentance, and remission of sins, to his remnant of the Jewish nation, to thousands convicted of the crime of murdering him! Acts, chap. ii. & iii. and v. 31. And see his followers among the nations: 1 Cor. i. 26. 27. 28. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many "wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many "noble," are called. "But God hath chosen the foolish "things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath "chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the "things which are mighty; and base things of the world, "and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and "things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." Observe them, and his influence upon them, vers. 30. "But

" of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto " us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and re- " demption" Chap. vi. 9. 10. 11.—" Neither fornicators, " nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers " of themſelves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, " nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, ſhall in- " herit the kingdom of God. And ſuch were ſome of you: " but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſti- " fied, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of " our God."

3. See next the ſtate of his kingdom in the ſouls of his ſubjects, (for his kingdom is within men), and behold the bruiſed reed not broken, and the ſmoking flax not quenched: Gal. v. 17. " For the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the " ſpirit againſt the fleſh: and theſe are contrary the one to " the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Rom. vii. 21.—24. " I find then a law, that when I would " do good, evil is preſent with me. For I delight in the " law of God, after the inward man. But I ſee another " law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, " and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is " in my members. O wretched man that I am, who ſhall " deliver me from the body of this death!" The " faith" that is " in the blood of the Son of God," faith " in the righ- " teouſneſs of our God and Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt," with the " hope" of eternal life, as the reward of that righteouſneſs, appears, in the " trial of faith," as a bruiſed reed, not broken. For all Chriſt's followers, who " fight the good fight," and " keep the faith," have ſome experience of what Paul ſays concerning the grace of the Lord Jeſus with reſpect to him- ſelf: 2 Cor. xii. 9. 10. " My grace is ſufficient for thee: for " my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs. Moſt gladly there- " fore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of " Chriſt may reſt upon me.——For when I am weak, then " am I ſtrong." He, who is a " prieſt upon his throne," prays for them, " that their faith fail not," in the trial of faith. And the weakeſt faith maintains a ſtruggle in their ſouls a- gainſt all doubt of the power of Chriſt's croſs to ſave them; ſo that they cannot deſpair: and ſo the bruiſed reed is not broken. And the " love of" that " truth" which is believed, love to one another, " for the truth's ſake which dwelleth " in them," appears, in the trial of faith, as a dimly-burn- ing lamp, or a ſmoking flax, like to be extinguiſhed by the work of ſelf-righteouſneſs in the heart againſt the truth,

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and by worldly lusts warring against the soul. Yet this smoking flax is not quenched, this dimly-burning lamp is not extinguished: for "the truth dwelleth in them, and "shall be with them for ever;" and that "seed of God re-"mains in" them that are born of God; so that they cannot sin unto death, 1 John iii. 9. 2 John, vers. 2.

4. We may again see this, in the profession of that truth which Christ came into the world to testify, the profession of that truth by which he reigns in the world, viz. That he is the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased. For those only hear his voice, who are of that truth: and none can appear to be his subjects in the world, but the confessors of that truth, shewing a hearty submission to his righteousness. Now, if we observe the profession of trusting in that name, "The Lord our righteousness," among the nations; we shall see the bruised reed not broken, and the smoking flax not quenched. The callers on this name found themselves first opposed by the authority and power of the Jewish church, flaming with self-righteous zeal, and then by the power of the Roman empire lifting up itself against this name in the pride of that virtue by which it subdued the world. But where are now these first oppofers? Their violent dealing came down upon their own heads. They are broken in pieces; and have left the bruised reed, as it was, not broken, and the smoking flax not quenched. The antichristian power, partaking of the nature of both the former, arose next in the broken empire; of which, all the world, wondering after it, said, "Who is like unto "the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" And this power always was, and still is, as far as it is not consumed, opposed to the profession of faith in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of love to one another for the sake of that. And that same truth, for the sake of which Christ's subjects love one another, remains still opposed by all the learning and eloquence that can be employed against it. For still it is professed in the world, and is, as from the beginning, the object of the contempt and hatred of all the nations. Christ's sceptre appears still as a bruised reed not broken, and his lamp as a smoking flax not quenched. And so it must be, till he set judgment in the earth, or till he send forth judgment unto victory. And not till then shall he appear, with a strong rod for a sceptre, "a rod of iron to rule the nations;" and with his lamp as "the bright and morning-star," Rev. ii. 26. 27. 28.

But when shall the truth be victorious? For it seems this must be the appearance of Christ's kingdom in the world, till then. While he rules "in the midst of his enemies," the rod of his strength must be as the bruised reed, and his lamp as the smoking flax: and that must be till his "enemies" be made "his footstool" in that "day of his "wrath," Psal. cx. The apostle tells us, this shall be at his coming, when death will be destroyed, 1 Cor. xv. 24. 25. 26. And when he comes to "put down all rule, and "all authority and power," and "death shall be destroyed," then will he set judgment in the earth. This is the hope that the apostle sets before Christians, when he tells them, verse. 19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, "we are of all men most miserable." Therefore, till his coming, and the resurrection of them that are his at his coming, the appearance of his kingdom on earth must be as represented by the bruised reed and smoking flax.

The apostle speaks of a kingdom for Christ's people at his coming, which "flesh and blood cannot inherit;" a "heavenly kingdom," which his people cannot inherit till they be "changed," and "bear the image of the heavenly "man," 1 Cor. xv. 49.—52. This is the same that is spoke of Matth. xxv. 34. 2 Tim. iv. 1. 18. And, Rev. v. 9. 10. this is represented as the hope of all the redeemed: "We shall reign on the earth." This is what they have in expectation by the Lamb's opening the sealed visions of Daniel, who spake plainly of this one thing, as the end of all, that "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole "heaven shall be given to the people of the saints." And this hope of all the redeemed is represented to us as fulfilled, Rev. xx. 4. 5. 6. in consequence of Christ's second coming, and the destruction of antichrist by that, represented chap. xix. 11.—21. All that believe the scripture, as well as those called *Millenarians*, own the *Millennium*, in some shape; and acknowledge a reign of the saints with Christ on the earth for a thousand years, in some sense or other: for while one denies the interpretation that another gives of these words, he holds them true in some sense of his own. But the great question is, When does that reign commence? or, At what time shall the beginning of that kingdom be fixed? And that which appears most easily from the scripture, is, that it begins not before the resurrection of the just at Christ's second appearing. And as the great day of the gospel is distinguished into "times of refreshing," so is the

the great day of judgment diſtinguiſhed into " times of re-
" ſtitution," Acts iii. 19. 21. And the firſt of theſe times is the reign of a thouſand years, beginning at the reſurrection of the juſt; which, by all that ſpace, goes before the reſurrection and judgment of the whole unjuſt dead. This was the ſenſe of the firſt Chriſtians, concerning the beginning of this reign, from the time of the apoſtles, and long after, till they began to think of a worldly kingdom for Chriſt, commencing in the time of Conſtantine; and the firſt that offered a ſcruple at this belief of the ancients, ſcrupled, at the ſame time, upon the authority of the book of the Revelation. Juſtin Martyr informs us, that not only he, but all Chriſtians, who denied not the reſurrection, in his time, were thus minded as to the beginning of the ſaints reign with Chriſt. Yea, in thoſe days, they even thought, that the apoſtle Peter, when (ſpeaking of the creation, and day of judgment, 2 Pet. iii. 5.—8.) he ſaid, " Be not
" ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord
" as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day," gave his ſanction to that ſaying that had paſſed current among the Jews, That each day of the creation ſtood for a thouſand years of the world's duration; and that the ſeventh thouſand years was to be the great Sabbath of reſt for God's people.

But, whatever be in this, we may ſee, as to the beginning of the ſaints reign, that the kingdom ſet up by the God of heaven, to ſtand on the deſtruction of the kingdoms of this world, Dan. ii. 44. takes not place till the fourth empire, viz. the Roman, be divided and broken into ten kingdoms: for the ſtone cut out of the mount without hands, ſmites the image upon the feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay, and ſo becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth, verſ. 34. 35. 41. And the dominion under the whole heaven given to the ſaints (Dan. vii. 14. 17. 18. 26. 27.) begins not till antichriſt, who rules in the broken empire, be deſtroyed, (verſ. 11. 12. 26.); which, the apoſtle tells us, is to be done by the brightneſs of the Lord's coming, 2 Theſſ. ii. 8.; even his ſecond coming, which is there ſpoke of. And the time when " the king-
" doms of this world" ſhall " become our Lord's and his
" Chriſt's," Rev. xi. 15. is the time of God's wrath on the nations that were angry at his kingdom, and the time of the dead that they ſhould be judged, and the time of rewarding the prophets, ſaints, and them that fear God's name,

ſmall

ſmall and great, verſ. 17. 18. who are to be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt, Luke xiv. 14.

The reſurrection at which this reign commences, is not that from treſpaſſes and ſins; becauſe it is the reſurrection of thoſe that were ſlain for the word of God, and had not received the mark of the beaſt, Rev. xx. 4. Nor is it ſome glorious revival of the cauſe for which martyrs ſuffered, with the reſurrection of ſome notable martyrs before the reſurrection of all the juſt. For this reſurrection and reign on the earth with Chriſt, is the hope of the whole redeemed, Rev. v. 9. 10.; the whole people of the ſaints gathered unto Chriſt at his coming, as one body, as one man, Dan. ch. vii. And none but they ſhall have part in this reſurrection and reign: for the ſecond death hath no power over any of them that partake in it, Rev. xx. 6. Any revival and glorious ſtate of the church, that is ſuppoſed before the reſurrection, at Chriſt's ſecond appearance, will ſtill include hypocrites; they muſt have part in any exalted ſtate of the church that can be before Chriſt's coming. But over them that have part in that reſurrection and reign, the ſecond death hath no power. For then ſhall "the Son of man "ſend forth his angels, and they ſhall gather out of his "kingdom all ſcandals, and them which do iniquity," Mat. xiii. 41. And when "the beloved city," the "holy Je-"ruſalem," (which is now "above" where Chriſt is), ſhall "deſcend out of heaven from God, having the glory of "God," and "the nations of them that are ſaved ſhall "walk in the light of it;" then "there ſhall in no wiſe "enter into it any thing that defileth,—but they which "are written in the Lamb's book of life." Thus they are all "bleſſed and holy" who have part in that firſt reſurrection, and who "ſtand in their lot," in that kingdom, reigning with Chriſt, as royal prieſts, a thouſand years before the reſt of the dead live again, Rev. xx. 4. 5. 6. And then ſhall that *reſt* take place that was promiſed to Daniel at "the end of the days," (Dan. xii. 12. 13.), the bleſſed reſt for "the dead in the Lord," from the time of the deſtruction of antichriſt, when "their works ſhall follow "them," being recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt, Rev. xiv. 11. 12. 13. This reſt will not be diſturbed by that great rebellion of Gog and Magog, and all the many people of the nations whoſe "dominion" had been "taken away" at the deſtruction of antichriſt, but had "a prolonging in life given them for" this "ſeaſon and "time"

" time" of the ſaints reign on the earth, Dan. vii. 11. 12. Nor can this oppoſition put an end to this glorious kingdom when the thouſand years are expired: for when theſe rebels, encompaſſing the camp of the ſaints, and the beloved city, are devoured by fire from God out of heaven; and the devil, that deceived them, to oppoſe Chriſt's kingdom in its glory, by a temptation meditated a thouſand years, is caſt into the lake of fire, the church will then be further exalted to reign with Chriſt in the judgment of the unjuſt dead; and, after that, to reign with him for ever in the new heavens, and the new earth, and to inherit the reſtored creation. So that the " kingdom ſhall not be left " to other people, — and it ſhall ſtand for ever;" the " ſaints ſhall poſſeſs the kingdom for ever and ever." Whereas they who expect an exalted ſtate and bleſſed reſt to the church in this world, before death be deſtroyed, are obliged to own, that this muſt be again diminiſhed and brought low before Chriſt's coming to judgment, to make it agree with the ſcriptures that ſpeak of the ſtate of Chriſtianity in the world toward the time of his coming.

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER V.

CHRIST the ROCK; The SPIRIT of GRACE in the CHURCH called GOD; CHRIST'S POWER making his PEOPLE willing; CHRIST'S INTERCESSION prefigured by MOSES; CHRIST ſpeaking in the PSALMS; CHRIST the IMAGE of GOD; CHRIST the SHEPHERD; The TIME of ANTICHRIST'S REIGN; CHRIST'S VISIBLE CHURCH.

Search the ſcriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtify of me. John v. 39.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1750.]

CHRIST the ROCK.

DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 4. 5. 6.

THE Rock, his work is *perfect: for all his ways* are *judgment: God of truth, and without iniquity; juſt and upright* is *he. A perverſe and froward generation hath deſtroyed him, their ſpot* is *not of his children. Do ye thus requite Jehovah, O fooliſh people and unwiſe!*

The Rock. The Jews have remarked, that this is the firſt place where God is ſtyled the *Rock* in the ſcriptures. Jeſus Chriſt applied this title to himſelf, on occaſion of Peter's confeſſing him to be the "Son of the living God," when he ſaid, "Upon this Rock I will build my church," Matth. xvi. 16. 17. 18. And we may ſee, from Deut. xxxi. 29. that

that this ſong of Moſes reſpects the *latter days*, the days of the Meſſiah; and foretells the evil that ſhould befal the Jews in thoſe days, becauſe of the *evil* they would "do in the "ſight of the Lord." And in this ſong, the rejection of the Jews, and the calling and ſalvation of the Gentiles, is plainly foretold. See verſ. 21. and 43. with Rom. x. 19. and xv. 10.

Juſt and upright he. We may ſee the meaning of this in theſe expreſſions of the New Teſtament, John viii. 29. "The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always thoſe "things that pleaſe him." Verſ. 46. "Which of you convin-"ceth me of ſin?" Acts iii. 14. 15. But ye denied the holy "One and the juſt, and killed the Prince of life." Acts vii. 52. — "the juſt One, of whom ye have been now the be-"trayers and murderers." Acts xiii. 28. "And though "they found no cauſe of death in him, yet deſired they "Pilate that he ſhould be ſlain." 1 John ii. 1. "Jeſus Chriſt "the righteous." Rom. x. 4. — "the end of the law for "righteouſneſs." 1 Pet. ii. 22. 24. — Who did no ſin, nei-"ther was guile found in his mouth. — Who his own ſelf "bare our ſins in his own body on the tree." Thus he is "Jehovah our righteouſneſs," according to the prophecy, Jer. xxiii. 6. Moſes here aſcribes judgment, truth, ſpotleſs righteouſneſs, and uprightneſs, to God the Rock, with reſpect to his work, which he calls perfect. And this work is the ſame that the Son of God ſpeaks of to his Father in theſe words, John xvii. 4. "I have glorified thee on the "earth; I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to "do." This was alſo foretold by Iſaiah, chap. xxvi. 12. — "For thou alſo haſt wrought all our works for us."

A perverſe and froward generation. This is applied by Peter to the Jews, when he charged them with the crime of murdering Chriſt: for he ſays to them who were pricked in their hearts with a conviction of this hainous ſin, Acts ii. 40. "Save yourſelves from this untoward generation." The word σκολιας uſed there is the ſame that we have here in the LXX. and διεστραμμενης, that is joined with it, is alſo uſed, Phil. ii. 15. with a reference to this paſſage, — "The ſons of God, "unſpotted in midſt of a perverſe and froward generation."

Hath deſtroyed him. The Hebrew verb here uſed, ſignifies to *corrupt*, to *deal corruptly*, to *deſtroy*, and to *kill*: for it expreſſes the deſtruction of the old world, Gen. vi. 13. 17. and the deſtruction of Sodom, Gen. xiii. 10. We have the full import of this word, both as it ſignifies to *deal corruptly*, and

to *deſtroy*, or *kill*, from Peter, when he ſays to the untoward generation, Acts ii. 23. "Him — ye have taken, and by "wicked hands have crucified and ſlain." The tranſlators could find no foundation in the original text for theſe plurals, "They have corrupted themſelves;" and therefore they have given it thus on the margin, "He hath corrupted to "himſelf," as more agreeable to the Hebrew. There is no nominative to be found here for the verb which they have rendered *to corrupt*, but *generation*; and nothing is more proper than to ſay, that the perverſe and froward generation have corrupted. But here lay the difficulty: Corrupted *him*, Heb. *to him*, could refer to none, but God the rock, immediately ſpoke of: and it could not be underſtood, how he ſhould be corrupted: for they did not reflect on "killing "the Prince of life," Acts iii. 15. or on "betraying and "murdering the juſt One," Acts vii. 52. or on "crucifying "the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8.; and, not conſidering this, it was eaſier to think of the people of Iſrael corrupting themſelves; which has therefore been given as the ſenſe of the text. But the following queſtion, "Do ye thus re- "quite Jehovah?" might lead us to think of the moſt wicked and ungrateful thing they ever did to Jehovah himſelf; which was, taking, and by wicked hands crucifying and ſlaying him whoſe name is "Jehovah our Righteouſneſs." And this is what Moſes here foretells.

While we are preſuming to differ from the tranſlation in this manner, we may think of another paſſage concerning the *Rock*, which has been rendered obſcure by our tranſlators. The text is Habak. i. 12. And it runs clearly thus in the Hebrew: "Art not thou from everlaſting, Jehovah, "my God, my holy One? We ſhall not die, Jehovah: to "judgment thou haſt placed him, even the rock; to re- "buking thou haſt founded him." This ſets before us clearly, God's way of ſaving us from death, by giving his Son to the death for us. And it is by the faith of this that the juſt is ſaid to live, chap. ii. 4. This ſame way of life is pointed out in this ſong of Moſes, where God, diſtinguiſhing himſelf from all falſe gods, by the judgment and vengeance that he executes, and by the mercy that he ſhews, ſays, verſ. 39. "See now that I, even I am he, and no god "with me: I will kill, and will make alive; I have wound- "ed, and I will heal; and from my hand no deliverer." This is laid open by Iſaiah, liii. 5. "But he was wounded for "our tranſgreſſions, bruiſed for our iniquities; the chaſtiſe- "ment

" ment of our peace upon him, and by his ſtripes we are " healed," (See 1 Pet. ii. 24.); and verſ. 10. " It pleaſed " Jehovah to bruiſe him." And Hoſea, chap. vi. 1. 2. ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe in theſe words: " Come and let us re- " turn unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal " us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up. After two " days will he revive us; in the third day he will raiſe us " up, and we ſhall live in his ſight." 1 Cor. xv. 4. — " He " roſe again the third day, according to the ſcriptures." Thus the living God makes us live by killing, and heals us by wounding. We are wounded and healed, killed and made alive, in our rock, whom he hath placed for judgment, and founded for rebuking or correction. And by the faith of this we live. But if we draw back from the profeſſion of this faith, we fall into his avenging hands; and " there is " no deliverer from his hand." Heb. x. 26. 27. " There re- " maineth no more ſacrifice for ſins, but a certain fearful " looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which " ſhall devour the adverſaries."

Their ſpot is not of his children, or, *Not his children their blot*. This may be underſtood by Phil. ii. 15. noticed before; and by John viii. 39. 40. 42. 44. " If ye were Abraham's chil- " dren, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye " ſeek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which " I have heard of God. This did not Abraham. —— If God " were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded " forth, and came from God; neither came I of myſelf, but " he ſent me. —— Ye are of your father the devil; and " the luſts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer " from the beginning, and abode not in the truth." 1 John iii. 10. 11. 12. " In this the children of God are manifeſt, " and the children of the devil: Whoſoever doth not righ- " teouſneſs, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his " brother. For this is the meſſage that ye heard from the " beginning, that we ſhould love one another: not as Cain, " who was of that wicked one, and ſlew his brother;" and verſ. 14. " We know that we have paſſed from death " unto life, becauſe we love the brethren: he that loveth " not his brother, abideth in death." The children of God love one another, for the ſake of this truth dwelling in them, *viz.* That Jeſus is his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleaſed. This is the rock on which the church is built. And this truth dwelling in them, as believed and loved by them, and working effectually in them, is the ſeed of God

that remains in them; so that they cannot sin, as the children of the devil do. The Jews, glorying in being God's children, hated this truth, and persecuted Jesus to death for it:—"This is the heir; let us kill him." And by this, *their spot*, it appeared manifestly, that they were not the children of God, but of the devil.

Do ye thus requite Jehovah? He whom the perverse and froward generation treated in this manner, is Jehovah. That generation would not understand, nor be convinced by the clearest evidence, that he whom they took, and crucified and slew, was the rock that begat Israel, the God that formed him, that led him of old through the wilderness, when "Jehovah alone did lead him, and no strange god with "him," verse. 12. So they were "a very froward gene-"ration, children in whom no faith," verse. 20.; "a nation "void of counsel, neither understanding in them," verse. 28. So Jesus calls them, Luke ix. 41. "a faithless and per-"verse generation."

That generation had a zeal of God against the idols of the nations. But they had forgot the true God of Israel; they had lost the knowledge of his character, or his *name* that was proclaimed to Moses. They knew not the *righteous Father*, whose *name* is declared and manifested by his Son Jesus Christ; who told them, they knew not the Father, because they knew not him the Son. They did not know the God of their fathers, of whom they said, that he was their God: and, being ignorant of his name, or his distinguishing character, they really worshipped another God for him; a new God, in his place, whom their fathers knew not. Their zeal of God was not according to knowledge; for they were ignorant of "the just God, and the Saviour:" and being ignorant of his justice, that will not pass one sin unpunished, nor justify men without a perfect righteousness, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and would not submit to the righteousness of God. So they trusted in another rock, and worshipped another God than the just God and Saviour: a God that cannot have mercy on whom he will, as the true God said to Moses, nor pardon iniquity, transgression, and sin, by visiting it upon the promised seed; a God that had no mercy to shew to any but those who are more worthy of his favour, and more fit for his acceptance, than others; nor any grace but what respects distinguishing merits among sinful men. This was another God than he who made himself known to their fathers,

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in the promiſe of the ſeed that ſhould bleſs all nations; redeeming them from the curſe, by being made a curſe for them. They ſacrificed to this new God, forgetting the inſtruction given them by the ſacrifices, *viz.* That there is no remiſſion without the ſhedding of blood; and that the blood of all their ſacrifices, which being ſtill repeated, could not take away ſin, referred to the blood of the promiſed ſeed, which being once offered, ſhould for ever take away ſin, and perfect the conſciences of ſinners to draw near to God. And this is the idolatry that the perverſe and froward generation is charged with in this ſong of Moſes: for it was by this that Iſrael provoked God to jealouſy, when he provoked them to jealouſy by them that were no people: and, beſides this, and the ſervice of mammon, there was then no idolatry charged upon the Jews. And every one that, under the Chriſtian name, worſhips God in any way of eſtabliſhing his own righteouſneſs before him, is guilty of the ſame idolatry, and lightly eſteems the rock of ſalvation, as the Jews.

The Spirit of Grace in the Church called God.

JAMES iv. 5. 6.

DO ye think that the ſcripture ſaith in vain, The ſpirit that dwelleth in us luſteth againſt envy, but he giveth more grace? Wherefore it ſaith, God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

Againſt envy. There is no reaſon why προς ſhould not be rendered *againſt* here, as it is in ſeveral other paſſages of the New Teſtament. See theſe inſtances, Acts ix. 5. "It is "hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks, προς κεντρα. 1 Cor. vi. 1. — "having a matter againſt another, προς τον ετερον. Eph. vi. 12. "We wreſtle not againſt (προς) fleſh and "blood, but againſt (προς) principalities, againſt (προς) powers, "againſt (προς) the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, "againſt (προς) ſpiritual wickedneſs." Heb. xii. 4. "Ye "have not yet reſiſted unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin," προς την αμαρτιαν.

Wherefore it ſaith. The ſcripture ſaith. And the words of it are immediately ſet down, according to the Greek verſion,

ſion, from Prov. iii. 34. Tranſlators have not noticed here, that the apoſtle, when he cites this text, firſt gives his ſenſe of the words, and then ſets them down after his explication. And commentators have vexed themſelves in vain to find the ſcripture, which ſaith, "The ſpirit that "dwelleth in us luſteth to envy, but he giveth more grace." But if we take the apoſtle here to be firſt giving us the meaning of the ſcripture, and then the words, the paſſage will be very eaſy and plain.

Now, according to his interpretation of Prov. iii. 34. Jehovah, who "bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt," verſ. 33. and "ſcorneth the ſcorners, or "reſiſteth the proud," is the "ſpirit that dwelleth in" Chriſtians. Jehovah is the name uſed in that paſſage of the Proverbs, for which the Greek verſion has both Θεος, *God*, and, after its uſual manner, Κυριος, *Lord*. The apoſtle has it, ο Θεος, *God*; which is his only difference from the LXX. in Prov. iii. 34. Thus the ſpirit that dwells in Chriſtians is called *God* by the apoſtle, and that as the word anſwers to the name *Jehovah* in the Hebrew text; for he expreſsly applies what is there ſaid of Jehovah, to the ſpirit who dwelleth in us. And we know this is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Son of God promiſed to ſend to his diſciples as another Comforter; of whom he ſaid, John xiv. 16. 17. "I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give "you another Comforter, and he ſhall abide with you for "ever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot re-"ceive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him: "but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall "be in you." Agreeably to this, the apoſtle Paul ſays to the Corinthian church, 1 Cor. iii. 16. "Know ye not that "ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth "in you?" Of this Spirit dwelling in the church, the apoſtle Peter ſaid to Ananias, Acts v. 3. 4. "Why hath Sa-"tan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghoſt?—Thou "haſt not lied unto men, but unto God." And the apoſtle John ſpeaks of him, when he ſays, 1 John iv. 4.—"Great-"er is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." And this is the *Holy Ghoſt*, the perſon who *ſaid* to the prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch, Acts xiii. 2. "Separate "me Barnabas and Saul to the work whereunto I have call-"ed them." This all-knowing and almighty perſon, is not the *Father*, who ſends him to us in the Son's name; nor is he the *Son*, who ſends him to us from the Father, as another Comforter: but he is the ſame *one Jehovah* with them; Jehovah,

hovah, whose "curse" is "in the house of the wicked," who "blesseth the habitation of the just," who "scorneth "the scorners," or "resisteth the proud, and giveth grace "to the humble."

—*Resisteth the proud*, is, according to the apostle, "lust-"eth against envy." And to this agrees what is said Gal. v. 17. 19. 20. 21. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and "the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the "one to the other.—— Now the works of the flesh are,— "hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, "heresies, envyings, murders."

—*But giveth grace unto the humble.* This is thus sensed by the apostle, "But he giveth more grace." And so he plainly makes the *humility* that has the promise of *grace*, to be, itself, first the effect of *grace*. Wherefore, when the Spirit gives grace to the humble, he is but giving more grace to them whom he hath first made humble by his grace. And so the qualification that has the promise of grace, is itself grace, according to the doctrine of the gospel, that makes our becoming little children the effect of conversion, or of regeneration, by the almighty energy of the Holy Ghost, whereby the Son of God was born of the virgin, and whereby he was raised from the dead.

Christ's Power making his People willing.

Psalm cx. 3.

THY people free-will offerings, in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness: from the womb, from the morning, thou hast the dew of thy nativity.

Free-will offerings. Compare with this Is. lx. 7. "All the "flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the "rams of Nebajoth shall minister unto thee: they shall "come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify "the house of my glory." And see it explained by the apostle, Rom. xv. 16. "That I should be the minister of Je-"sus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of "God, that the offering up (or sacrificing) of the Gentiles "might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

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See likewise Is. lxvi. 20. and Mark ix. 49. 50. Rom. xii. 1.

In the day of thy power. This day is the time or season of the gospel, of which the apostle speaks 2 Cor. vi. 2. (referring to Is. xlix. 8.), "For he saith, I have heard thee in a "time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I suc- "coured thee. Behold, now is the accepted time; be- "hold, now is the day of salvation." This is the time of Christ's sitting on the right hand of God, and ruling in the midst of his enemies, till they be made his footstool. It is the time when the rod of his strength is sent out of Zion, vers. 1. 2. And so it is the day of his power, whereby his people are made willing, and ruled in midst of his enemies. And this day will continue, till it be succeeded by "the day of his wrath," vers. 5. when his enemies shall be made his footstool. This day of his power, as distinguished from that day of his wrath, must be the day of grace; and his power here, in distinction from that power striking thro' kings, and wounding the head over many countries, must be the power of grace.

In the beauties of holiness; *i. e.* in the glorious sanctuary, or holy of holies, where he who is "a priest for ever after the "order of Melchizedek," exercises his office, vers. 1. & 4. This is not the earthly sanctuary, where the high priests of Aaron's order only could enter with their offerings, Heb. viii. 4.; but heaven itself, where Christ is entered to appear in the presence of God for his people, Heb. ix. 24. and where he is set down on the right hand of God, Heb. x. 12. 13. 14. Into this holiest all his people who are sanctified by his one offering, have liberty to enter: and they draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, Heb. x. 19. 20. 21. 22. And so they are free-will offerings in the holiest of all, or in the beauties of holiness.

The dew of thy nativity. It is generally supposed, that the willing people are here compared to the dew. But the dew is an image as fit for Christ's power, whereby they are made willing. And this application of it has no less countenance from other scriptures. Deut. xxxii. 2. "My doctrine shall "drop as the rain: my speech shall distil as the dew, as the "small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon "the grass." Hos. xiv. 5. "I will be as the dew unto Is- "rael; he shall grow as the lily." So Christ's gracious and powerful influence upon his people, by his word and Spirit, is here compared to the dew. His gospel coming to them that were given him of the Father, not in word only, but

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in power, and in the Holy Ghost; falling upon them as the dew, is that power of his by which they become devoted to him as free-will offerings: for the apostle tells us, that the "offering up of the Gentiles," by means of the gospel, is "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." And it is on account of this influence of the Spirit upon them, that "the remnant "of Jacob" is said to be "in the midst of many people, as "a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that "tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men," Micah v. 7. And the Psalmist makes use of this same similitude in describing the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among them, Psal. cxxxiii. 3. "As the dew of Her-"mon that descendeth upon the mountains of Zion; for "there the Lord commandeth the blessing, life for ever-"more."

This is the dew of Christ's *nativity:* either his nativity of the virgin; as to which it is said, Luke i. 35. "The Holy "Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest "shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which "shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God;" or, more suitably to this passage, his nativity from the dead, as "the head of his body, the church; the beginning, the "first-born from the dead," Col. i. 18.; as to which it is said, (Psal. ii. 7. with Acts xiii. 33.), "Thou art my Son, this day "have I begotten thee." For thereby he was "declared to "be the Son of God with power, Rom. i. 4. We find this similitude of the dew applied to the power of his resurrection, whereby his people shall also be raised from the dead, Is. xxvi. 19. "Thy dead" men "shall live, together with "my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that "dwell in the dust; for thy dew" is as "the dew of herbs, "and the earth shall cast out the dead." While Christ's power is compared to the dew, it is very fitly called the dew of his nativity: for however gently and imperceptibly it fall upon men, as the dew; yet it is effectual to overcome their natural aversion, and irresistibly incline their hearts and wills unto him; because it is that same power whereby he was made of a woman, the same exceeding greatness of power that wrought in him when he was raised from the dead, Heb. ii. 11. Eph. i. 19. 20. We see the irresistible influence of warlike subduing power compared to the dew falling on the ground, 2 Sam. xvii. 12. But here it is the power of exceeding abundant grace, even that grace with

which nothing ſhall be impoſſible: the dew of Chriſt's nativity.

From the womb, from the morning thou haſt the dew, Heb. *to thee the dew.* He had it; he was furniſhed with this glorious heart-ſubduing power that is peculiar to him, "from the "womb," from his birth, being conceived by it in the womb of the virgin. He was poſſeſſed of it, and it belonged to him from the time when he was begotten by it from the dead, and made head over all things to the church, his body.

He had this dew "from the morning" of that "day of "his power," wherein his people become free-will offerings in the heavenly ſanctuary, where he ſits on the right hand of the Father. Behold him having this dew, and ſee its influence in the morning of that day of power, the morning of the goſpel-day, Acts ii. 33. "Therefore being by the "right hand of God exalted, and having received of the "Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth "this which ye now ſee and hear. Verſ. 34. 35. "For "David is not aſcended into the heavens; but he ſaith "himſelf, The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou on my "right hand, until I make thy foes thy footſtool." See likewiſe Eph. i. 22. 23. & ii. 1.—"And gave him to be "head over all things to the church, which is his body, "the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all; and you who "were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins." And compare Col. i. 18.—22.

Chriſt's Interceſſion prefigured by Moſes.

EXODUS xvii. 16.

Becauſe the hand upon the throne of Jah, war to Jehovah againſt Amalek, from generation to generation.

ON the margin of our Engliſh Bible, we have this tranſlation, "The hand upon the throne of the Lord." But we have for it in the text this comment, "The Lord "hath ſworn." And this is, becauſe "lifting up the hand" ſometimes ſignifies "ſwearing," as in Gen. xiv. 22.: and the Lord's ſwearing is thus expreſſed, Exod. vi. 8. Nehem. ix. 15. Deut. 32. 40. But "the hand upon the throne" is

is not the same with "lifting up the hand," which is also frequently used to denote prayer and intercession, as well as swearing; as we may see from these texts, Psal. xxviii. 2. & cxli. 2. Lam. iii. 41. 1 Tim. ii. 1. 8. 1 Chron. vi. 12. 13. And it should have been observed, that "the hand on "the throne," with respect to "Jehovah's war with Ama- "lek," must certainly refer to the use of Moses's hand in the battle with Amalek: for the name of the altar built on that occasion, and this that Moses said upon it, refers to that same battle just before described, from verse. 8.—13. See how much the hand of Moses signified in that fight with Amalek.—"I will stand on the top of the hill, with "the rod of God in mine hand.—And it came to pass, when "Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when "he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses's "hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it un- "der him, and he sat thereon: and Aaron and Hur staid "up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on "the other side; and his hands were steady until the going "down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and "his people with the edge of the sword." The power of God attended upon the stretching out of his hand with that rod, as in dividing the sea, Exod. xiv. 16. 21. And he interceded effectually with God, when he intreated him, by spreading forth his hands to him, Exod. ix. 28. 29. 33. So he intercedes here for Israel against Amalek, by holding up his hands, and prevails. The victory over the Amalekites is ascribed to Jehovah, as his work, in the name given to the altar built on that occasion, verse. 15. But it is manifest he warred against Amalek, according to the holding up of Moses's hand: for when he let it down, Amalek prevailed; but when his hands were staid up, and made steady till sun-set, Joshua discomfited Amalek. The weakeness of his hands is particularly noticed; and he was not to live always; while yet Jehovah was to have war with Amalek to all generations, according to this pattern that was written for a memorial, to assure his people, that he would at last utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, verse. 14. But though Moses could not hold up his hands for one day, and though he was not to live till the extirpation of Amalek; yet he speaks of another hand, the "hand on the throne of Jah," or "Jah's hand on "the throne," according to which Jehovah will wage war with Amalek to his extirpation, even as he fought against

him that day till he was difcomfited, according to the holding up of his hand. And that hand will not fail to all generations, till Amalek be utterly deftroyed.

Ezekiel gives the moft particular defcription of the appearance of Jehovah's glory that is to be found any where in the Old Teftament, Ezek. i. 26. 28. He faw "the likenefs "of a throne, as the appearance of a fapphire ftone, and "upon the likenefs of the throne, the likenefs as the appear-"ance of a man above upon it."—And he fays, "This" was "the appearance of the likenefs of the glory of Jehovah." This appearance of the likenefs of man on the throne of glory, has no other foundation but the man Chrift Jefus, who is the Son of God, the brightnefs of the Father's glory. And this likenefs of Jehovah's glory was familiar to Mofes, with whom he fpake "mouth to mouth," and "face to face, as a man fpeaketh unto his friend," Numb. xii. 8. Exod. xxxiii. 10. 11. So that when he fpeaks of "the hand upon the throne," he may be underftood to mean the hand of that likenefs of man that appeared to him above on the throne. And feeing Mofes, the mediator of the covenant with Ifrael at Sinai, was the type of the man Chrift Jefus, the mediator of the new covenant, as he himfelf faid, "The Lord thy God will raife up unto thee a pro-"phet, from the midft of thee, of thy brethren, like unto "me;" it is eafy to underftand this tranfition from the *hand* of Mofes to his *hand*.

As Amalek was the "firft of the nations" that attacked Ifrael after their deliverance from Egypt, and oppofed them in their journey from thence, through the wilderneſs, to the promifed reft, he was a very fit figure to repreſent the enemies of God's church, in all ages, to the end of the world; with whom Jehovah will have war in all generations. And the preſervation of the church in midſt of theſe enemies, is by the power of God, through the interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, who prays for his people, that their faith (whereby they overcome) fail not, till at laſt the remembrance of their enemies be put out from under heaven, Pſal. ii. 7. to 12. and Pſal. cx.

Beſides this interceſſion of Moſes, ſaving Iſrael in the fight with Amalek, and prefiguring Chriſt's interceſſion for the true Iſrael in the fight of faith, we have ſeveral other inſtances of his interceding as the mediator of the old covenant, ſtanding in the breach, to turn away wrath from Iſrael when they ſinned. But the moſt remarkable is that after

after the making of the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 30.—33. " Moſes ſaid unto the people, Ye have ſinned a great ſin: " and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I " ſhall make an atonement for your ſin. And Moſes re- " turned unto the Lord, and ſaid, Oh, this people have " ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold. " Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their ſin: and if not, blot " me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou haſt writ- " ten. And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Who that hath ſin- " ned to me, will I blot him out of my book?" The atonement that Moſes here propoſes to make for the people is, by his life given for theirs, that they might not be deſtroyed in the wilderneſs. In place of their being conſumed, and a great nation made of him, he intreats the Lord to cut him off, to ſave them from being conſumed; for he thought it " expedient, that one man ſhould die for the people, and " that the whole nation periſh not." But the Lord would not accept this atonement from the hand of Moſes, who was himſelf a ſinner. Interceſſion by ſuch an atonement belonged to a greater than Moſes. It is only proper to the Mediator of the new covenant, who knew no ſin, and was made ſin for his people, that they might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him. If we think of this, we ſhall eaſily ſee, that this interceſſion of Moſes for Iſrael cannot be a parallel to *Paul's wiſh*, Rom. ix. 3. He was not, as Moſes, the typical interceſſor. Nor could he have any thought of himſelf as a ſin-offering or atonement, whoſe office it was to proclaim the only true atonement already made by Jeſus Chriſt; and to ſet him forth as " able to ſave to the ut- " termoſt all that come to God by him, ſeeing he ever li- " veth to make interceſſion for them" by that " one offer- " ing" whereby he has for ever perfected all them that are ſanctified.

Christ ſpeaking in the Psalms.

Luke xxiv. 44.

——*All things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moſes, and the prophets, and the pſalms, concerning me.*

HEre our Lord takes particular notice of the pſalms, when ſpeaking of the things written of him in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament. And David, in his laſt words,

words, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. ſpeaking of himſelf, " as pleaſant " in the pſalms of Iſrael," ſays, He was " ſet up for the " Meſſiah."

The Lord, in the days of his fleſh, brought the 110th pſalm to ſhew, that the Chriſt, being David's ſon, was yet his Lord; and the 118th Pſalm, verſ. 22. as a prophecy of his ſufferings from the rulers of the Jewiſh church, and of his glorious exaltation as the head of his church. And he applied Pſal. viii. 2. to the children crying *Hoſanna* to him, according to Pſal. cxviii. 25. 26. and Pſal. xxxv. 19. to the hatred that the Jews ſhewed to him. And we ſee the application that the firſt Chriſtian church makes of the ſecond Pſalm in that ſolemn prayer recorded Acts iv. 24.—30.

But after the Lord had pointed particularly to the pſalms, as ſpeaking of him, when he gave his apoſtles commiſſion to preach his reſurrection, and declare his ſufferings, and the following glory, according to the ſcriptures, we ſee them, in their preachings recorded in the New Teſtament, inſiſting eſpecially on the pſalms, when they were ſhewing, that their teſtimony concerning Chriſt was according to the ſcriptures. In the firſt preaching after Chriſt's aſcenſion, Acts ii. Peter cites Pſal. xvi. 8.—11. to this purpoſe. And it is to be obſerved, that he ſhews what David ſpeaketh there to be the language of Chriſt, and not his own; even as the Lord had claimed the words of Pſal. xxxv. 19. as his own words, John xv. 25. And as, by mentioning the firſt words of Pſal. xxii. in his addreſs to his Father on the croſs, he made that pſalm his own prayer; ſo the apoſtle, Heb. ii. 12. makes the words of the 22d verſe of that pſalm to be his words; and likewiſe chap. x. 5. the words of Pſal. xl. 6. 7. 8. In like manner we ſee from Rom. xv. 3. 9. that the words of Pſal. lxix. 9. and Pſal. xviii. 49. are his words alſo. From all which it appears, that David ſtands for the Meſſiah in the pſalms; and many things ſaid by him, are ſaid for the Meſſiah, and muſt be conſidered as his language, and not David's own.

In the 18th pſalm, laſted noted, we have a deſcription of Chriſt's ſufferings, his reſurrection, and entry into his glory; wherein he ſays, he is rewarded according to his righteouſneſs, according to the cleanneſs of his hands, verſ. 19. 20. He ſpeaks there of iniquity, which he calls his own, though he did not commit it, as the cauſe of his ſufferings; while his righteouſneſs is the cauſe of the following glory, verſ. 23. 24. Even ſo, Pſal. xl. 12. he ſays, " Mine iniquities " have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look " up,"

" up," while he prays the Father for deliverance, for confuſion to his enemies, and for the joy of his ſalvation to his people, verſ. 13.—16.; becauſe he came to do his will, and had his law in his heart, verſ. 6. 7. 8. The 119th pſalm is the prayer of one greatly afflicted, and perſecuted unto death; praying for life from the dead, on account of his own righteouſneſs, even the obedience that he " learned " from the things that he ſuffered," verſ. 71. And while he profeſſes the fervency of his love to God's law, and the perfection of his obedience, in ſuch a manner as no ſinful man can do, he ſpeaks of his " going aſtray" from God's word, verſ. 67.; and " going aſtray like a loſt ſheep," verſ. 176. Theſe words that conclude the pſalm, " I have gone " aſtray like a loſt ſheep, ſeek thy ſervant: for I do not " forget thy commandments," cannot be reconciled and underſtood, but by ſuch texts as theſe, If. liii. 6. " All " we like ſheep have gone aſtray: we have turned every " one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the " iniquity of us all." 1 Pet. ii. 24. 25. " Who his own " ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree; that we, " being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righteouſneſs; by whoſe " ſtripes ye were healed: for ye were as ſheep going aſtray; " but are now returned to the ſhepherd and biſhop of your " ſouls." The end of his obedience and ſufferings largely repreſented in this pſalm, (even his ſufferings for their ſins, verſ. 53. and 136.), was, that they might be reſtored to the divine favour, and the obedience of his law. We cannot perceive how he owns his going aſtray like a loſt ſheep, and at the ſame time makes his not forgetting God's commandments, and being his ſervant, the plea for God's ſeeking him back from his ſtrayings, if we do not think of him as the repreſentative of ſinners before God, and conſider him as ſpeaking of himſelf in that view. And ſo, when the iniquities of all his people were laid on him to bear the puniſhment of them, he could then call them his: for ſurely, if he could not call our ſins his, we can never call his righteouſneſs ours. And, in the ſame way wherein he ſays he went aſtray, he alſo ſays, for his people whom he repreſents, that he is God's ſervant, and has not forgot his commandments: what he did for them, as their repreſentative, being accounted as done by them, for whom he, that knew no ſin, was made ſin, that they, who were ſinners, might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21.

Our

Our tranſlators, not thinking of Chriſt's ſpeaking in the pſalms, and finding ſome words too high for the pſalmiſt, have given us a gloſs, to make them apply to David, in place of a tranſlation of the words. For an inſtance of this, we may ſee Pſal. xxxv. It has been before obſerved, that Jeſus Chriſt takes the words of verſ. 19. as his own: and he ſays, verſ. 27. "Let them ſhout for joy, and be glad, that love my righteouſneſs." In place of "them that love," or deſire, and delight in, "my righteouſneſs," we have this gloſs in the text of our tranſlation, "that favour my righteous "cauſe;" while the margin gives the tranſlation, "my "righteouſneſs." In the ſeveral paſſages where the pſalmiſt ſpeaks of his righteouſneſs, pleading that and his holineſs for deliverance and ſalvation, he muſt be underſtood as ſpeaking the language of the Meſſiah, for whom he was ſet up, and not his own.

And when we hear Chriſt ſpeaking in many places of the pſalms, we ſhall then ſing them with more underſtanding and eaſe than is commonly done.

CHRIST the IMAGE of GOD.

NUMBERS xii. 6. 7. 8.

—— *If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myſelf known to him in a viſion,* and *will ſpeak to him in a dream. My ſervant Moſes* is *not ſo, who* is *faithful in all my houſe. With him will I ſpeak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches; and the ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold.*

WE may have ſome notion of this *appearance* of God to Moſes ſpeaking to him mouth to mouth, and of his *ſimilitude* that he beheld, from Ezek. i. 26. 27. 28. — "And "upon the likeneſs of the throne was the likeneſs as the "appearance of a man above upon it, — as the appearance "of fire, and it had brightneſs round about. As the ap"pearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of "rain, ſo was the appearance of the brightneſs round about. "This was the appearance of the likeneſs of the glory of "the Lord. And when I ſaw it, I fell upon my face; and "I heard a voice of one that ſpake."

And

And the apoſtle ſhews us the truth of God's making himſelf known to the prophets, and of his appearance to Moſes, when he ſays, Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. " God, who at ſundry times, " and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fa- " thers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken un- " to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all " things; by whom alſo he made the worlds; who, being " the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his " ground of glorying, and upholding all things by the word " of his power, when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, " ſat down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high."

Here Jeſus Chriſt is conſidered as the firſt begotten of the dead, as having purged our ſins by himſelf, and being ſet down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high; and as being declared to be the Son of God, by whom all things were created and are upheld; and who is the proper object of the worſhip of all the angels of God. See alſo verſ. 4. 5. 6. And, in this view of him, it is ſaid, that he is " the brightneſs " of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his ground " of glorying." If we would underſtand this, we muſt conſider, that the apoſtle is writing to Hebrews concerning the manifeſtation of God in Jeſus Chriſt, with a reference to his appearances in the Old Teſtament. And ſo we muſt not think, that his ſtyle is philoſophical, or that he is to be explained by philoſophy: for he uſes a way of ſpeaking here ſuitable to deſcriptions the Hebrews had of the divine appearances in the ſcripture. And, in order to eſtabliſh them in the faith of the New-teſtament revelation, he is ſhewing, that the true and full diſcovery of God, prefigured by his emblematical appearances of old, is only to be found in Jeſus Chriſt.

And ſo " the brightneſs," or ſplendor, " of glory," leads us to think of the ſplendor around the fire in the appearance of the man on the throne, which Ezekiel calls, " the like- " neſs of the glory of Jehovah." Light, which appears in its colours in the rainbow, is the ſcriptural emblem of the Son of God, as fire is of the Father. If Moſes was ſo highly honoured and exalted above ordinary prophets, by the familiarity of this likeneſs of the glory of Jehovah ſpeaking with him mouth to mouth, what then muſt be the excellency of that glory of Jehovah himſelf, who ſpake to Moſes, and whoſe appearance he was honoured to behold? And this is he by whom the New-teſtament revelation is made.

And " the expreſs image" anſwers to the *ſimilitude* which Moſes was privileged to behold. The word that is tranſlated *ſimilitude*, Numb. xii. 8. is the ſame that is rendered *likeneſs* in the ſecond commandment, Exod. xx. 4. Deut. v. 8.; where Iſrael is forbidden to make " a graven image, or any " likeneſs," to worſhip. Nor is the apoſtle's manner of expreſſion here diſagreeable to ſayings that may be ſuppoſed current among the Jews, though not contained expreſsly in their canon of the ſcriptures. For we may ſee a paſſage not unlike this in the " Wiſdom of Solomon," which they looked on as a book of wiſe and good ſayings, though they knew it was not given by inſpiration. The apoſtle ſeems here to countenance this deſcription of the wiſdom whereof Solomon ſpake in the Proverbs, Wiſd. vii. 26. " For ſhe " is the brightneſs of the eternal light, and the unſpotted " mirror of the energy of God, and the image of his good- " neſs."

Of his ground of glorying: της υποστασεως αυτου. This has been tranſlated " of his perſon," without any regard to the uſe of the word υποστασις in all the other texts of the New Teſtament where it occurs; or even in the Greek verſion of the Old, which was uſed in the time of the apoſtles. The texts of the New Teſtament where this word is found, are as follows: 2 Cor. ix. 4. " In this ſame confidence, υποστασει, of " boaſting, or glorying." 2 Cor. xi. 17. " In this confi- " dence, υποστασει, of boaſting, or glorying." Heb. iii. 14. " If we hold faſt the beginning of the confidence, υποστασεως, " ſtedfaſt unto the end." This is but a repetition of the ſame thing that was ſaid before, verſ. 6. " If we hold faſt " the confidence, or boldneſs, and the rejoicing, or glory- " ing, of the hope firm unto the end." And this is agreeable to the uſe of υποστασις in the LXX. Ruth i. 12. Ezek. xix. 5.; where it ſtands for the ground of hope, or for the confidence of hope. Heb. xi. 1. " Now faith is the con- " fidence, υποστασις, of things hoped for." It ſhould alſo have been rendered *confidence* here, as on the margin, rather than *ſubſtance*, which is neither ſo intelligible, nor ſo ſuitable to the foregoing context, wherewith this is connected. If we look back to that context, we ſhall ſee that it brings υποστασις to the ſame uſe here as in the other paſſages, chap. x. 34. 35. " Ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods, " knowing in yourſelves that ye have in heaven a better " and an enduring ſubſtance, υπαρξιν. Caſt not away there- " fore your boldneſs, παρρησιαν, which hath great recompenſe " of

" of reward." Verſ. 39. " But we are not of them who draw " back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the " ſaving of the ſoul. Now faith is the confidence of things " hoped for."

Theſe are all the other texts of the New Teſtament where ὑποστασις is uſed: and in theſe we ſee it belongs to *boaſting*, or *glorying*; being connected with it, as here with *glory*. So that it denotes the ground of glorying, ſupporting the mind in confidence, and eſtabliſhing the heart in boldneſs of glorying. And even here, where it is applied to God, it ſhould rather be taken in ſome ſuch ſenſe, than be allowed to paſs for one or other of theſe metaphyſical terms, *perſon* and *eſſence*, or *ſubſiſtence* and *ſubſtance*, to which the ſcripture-uſe of it has no manner of reference. And what have theſe terms to do with the various uſes of this word in the Septuagint? as, (beſides that already noted), a man's *age* or *time of life*, the *ſuſtenance* of his life, the *ſubſtance* of his houſe, a *place of ſtanding*, and a military *ſtation*, fortreſs, or *garriſon*.

Let us ſee then how we may apply the ſcriptural ſenſe of this word to God, when it is reſcued out of the hands of the philoſophers, the diſputers of this world.

He is eternally bleſſed in the perfect conſciouſneſs of his own glory, which is diſplayed in Chriſt to be joyfully gloried in by thoſe who are admitted to behold it. And to repreſent this unbounded and incomparable perfection, ſo as it may, in the repreſentation, loſe nothing of the force of that brightneſs it hath in his eye who glories in it with infinite confidence; this belongs, and is proper only to the Meſſiah, who, by his ſitting down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, having by himſelf purged our ſins, is demonſtrated to be the Son of God, the creator and upholder of all things; whom all the angels of God, as well as men, ought to worſhip.

The glory of God is his *goodneſs*. *God is love.* This love, appearing in the way of *grace* and *mercy* to worthleſs and wretched ſinners, and at the ſame time ſhewing itſelf in its neceſſary oppoſition to all tranſgreſſion of his law that requires love, (which the ſcripture calls *jealouſy*), is the name of God that was proclaimed to Moſes darkly, but plainly ſhewed and declared by Jeſus Chriſt. This diſtinguiſhes the true God from idols: " The juſt God and the Saviour." And he declares, that he himſelf *delights* in the *loving-kindneſs*, *judgment*, *and righteouſneſs*, which he did *exerciſe in the earth*,

when he delivered his Son for our offences, and raised him again for our justification.

If then his ὑποστασις be his "ground of glorying," that is to say, the full splendor of this his glory, as he beholds it in himself with infinite confidence of glorying; this is, as it were, graved to perfection of likeness in Jesus Christ, and represented fully in him, who, having purged our sins by himself, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. And so he is the "express image of his ground of glory-"ing."

The infinite dignity of him, in whom the Father's glory is manifested, sets it forth before him in that same brightness wherein he sees it in himself, and glories in it. "This "is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He could not be this image of his Father's ground of glorying, if he were not God, and had not the same ground of glorying that the Father hath. For the opposition of the divine love unto our sins could not appear, as it is gloried in by the Father, in the Son's purging our sins *by himself*, if he who so purged them, be not infinitely worthy. Nor can the divine love and grace shew itself, as it is gloried in by the Father, in the giving of him, if he who is the gift, be less than the love that gave him. Jesus Christ, who purged our sins by himself, is the Son of his Father's love, as he is given and sent forth from the Father to be the propitiation for our sins; for so he is the proper distinguishing fruit of that love in whom the whole of it is so manifested, that he that hath seen him hath seen the Father. And being also the proper object of the divine love, in its full complacence, he is capable to inherit all it hath. Thus he is the Son of his Father's love, his perfect likeness, and the heir of all that he hath. And this could not be, if he were not another than his Father, distinguished to us from him as we distinguish one person from another. Nor could it be, if he were not the same only true God with the Father, even one of those *Elohim* who made the world, and who are *one Jehovah*, the sole object of religious worship. And so he is in this same passage declared to be the creator and upholder of all things, by the word of his power, and the object of the worship of the highest order of creatures. As he is one of the living and true *Elohim*, he is as invisible to us as the other two, the Father and the Holy Ghost; and could as little be seen by us, as is the Father. But he has appeared among the creatures, and become visible, by coming forth

from

from the Father, in becoming man with us, and by ſitting down, in his human nature, on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, when he had, in that nature, purged our ſins by himſelf, or through the infinite dignity of his perſon. And they who have him in this view, know the Father: for thus he is the expreſs image of the Father's ground of glorying, and the brightneſs of his glory.

And this is the truth of the likeneſs of man on the throne, in the appearance of the likeneſs of Jehovah's glory; even as it is likewiſe the true reaſon of God's ſpeaking of himſelf after the manner of man in the ſcriptures, that have it for their great ſcope to ſet forth the glory of God in the man Chriſt Jeſus. This appearance of the glory of Jehovah was well known to Moſes, with whom he ſpake mouth to mouth. But in this, that divine perſon was only ſhewing to Moſes, in a figure, what he was really about to be.

CHRIST the SHEPHERD.

MICAH ii. 12. 13.

I will ſurely aſſemble, O Jacob, all of thee: I will ſurely gather the remnant of Iſrael, I will put them together as the ſheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midſt of their fold: they ſhall tumultuate from man. The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have paſſed through the gate, and are gone out by it; and their king ſhall paſs before them, and the Lord on the head of them.

JEſus Chriſt points particularly to this text, John x. 1. to 18. where he applies to himſelf the old prophecies concerning the Meſſiah under the notion of a Shepherd. Theſe images in his parable, the *ſheepfold*, the *door*, the ſhepherd, "leading forth his own ſheep," and "going before them," and "their following him," and "flying from ſtrangers," are all taken from this text.

——*As the flock in the midſt of their fold*, or *as a flock in the midſt of its fold.* John x. 16. "And other ſheep I have, "which are not of this fold," (*i. e.* of the Jewiſh church): "them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice; "and there ſhall be one flock, one ſhepherd."

They ſhall tumultuate from man. The Hebrew word fitly expreſſes

preſſes the commotion that is to be ſeen in a flock of ſheep when they ſhun a ſtranger or deſtroyer breaking into their fold. And the Septuagint renders it by *ſhunning*, or *flying from*, εξαλουται εξ ανθρωπων. Jeſus applies this, when he ſays, John x. 5. "And a ſtranger will they not follow, but will "flee from him: for they know not the voice of ſtrangers." Verſ. 10. "The thief cometh not, but for to ſteal, and to "kill, and to deſtroy: I am come that they might have "life."

The breaker is come up before them. John x. 4. "And when "he putteth forth his own ſheep, he goeth before them." Verſ. 11. 17. 18. "I am the good ſhepherd: the good "ſhepherd giveth his life for the ſheep.——Therefore "doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, "that I may take it again.——I have power to lay it "down, and I have power to take it again. This com-"mandment have I received of my Father." Verſ. 3. "To him the porter openeth." By this he diſtinguiſhes himſelf from hirelings, whoſe own the ſheep are not, and who care not for them, and from thieves and robbers, from whom they flee. By this door he entered into the ſheep-fold, and the Father opened it to him; giving him commandment to take his life again for the ſheep, which, at his commandment, he laid down for them. And by this his ſheep know him, diſtinguiſh him, and acknowledge him as their ſhepherd, while they follow him, and flee from others that would be lords over them, not entering by this door. He "whom God hath raiſed up, having looſed the "pains of death, becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould "be holden of it," is the true ſhepherd of the ſheep. The breaker, who alone was able to break through death, and come up from it by the merit of his own blood ſhed for the redemption of the church, is the only true Lord of the church. He hath made a paſſage, by his own blood, through death unto eternal life, for himſelf, and for all his people whom he leads unto that life. And the Father hath "ſhew-"ed" him "the path of life" from death, from which there was no paſſage, no door of outgate to eternal life before, Pſal. xvi. 10. 11. & cxviii. 17. 18. 19. 20. Heb. xiii. 20.

——*They have broken up, and have paſſed through the gate, and are gone out by it.* John x. 3. 4. "He——leadeth them "out; and when he putteth forth his own ſheep, he goeth "before them, and the ſheep follow him." Verſ. 7. 9. ——"I am the door of the ſheep.——I am the door: by "me if any man enter in, he ſhall be ſaved, and ſhall "go

" go in and out, and find paſture." Verſ. 27. 28. —— " They follow me, and I give unto them eternal life." Becauſe the paſſage he made for himſelf and them through death to eternal life, is by his own blood; he is thereby alſo the door, the gate by which they paſs to that life, and by which they have acceſs to his church that has the promiſe of eternal life: for they all have acceſs, and enter there, only by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, whereby he was brought again from the dead, Heb. xiii. 20. Eph. ii. 13. Heb. x. 19. 20. & xii. 22. 23. 24. Col. i. 13. 14. This is the gate of righteouſneſs, the door by which whoſoever enters ſhall be ſaved; and Chriſt's ſheep go in by it, and they go out, and find paſture. For when we conſider, that his fleſh and blood, given as a ſacrifice for their life, is their proper paſture, and the food of eternal life, (John vi. 51. 53. 54. 55.), we may ſee how their finding paſture is connected with their going out at this door. And they follow him through death unto eternal life. They ſuffer with him, and are glorified together. They follow the Lamb that was ſlain, the Captain of their ſalvation made perfect through ſufferings, Rom. viii. 17. 18. Phil. iii. 10. 11. 15. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Matth. xvi. 24. He cannot be followed in the obedience he learned from the things that he ſuffered, but in a ſtate of humiliation and ſuffering: for it is only in ſuch a ſtate that there is room or place for that ſelf-denial, patience, ſubmiſſion, and reſignation, and prayer for forgiveneſs to perſecutors, wherein his followers imitate him. They run the race ſet before them, looking to Jeſus, — who, for the joy ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame.

And their king hath paſſed before them. The King of the ſheep is their ſhepherd. Thus David was taken from feeding ſheep, to feed Iſrael, *i. e.* to rule them as their king, Pſal. lxxviii. 70. 71. 72. And Ezek. xxxiv. the rulers of Iſrael are called *ſhepherds* when they are blamed for their ill government, and Chriſt promiſed as a good ſhepherd. Their King then is their ſhepherd. John x. 2. " He that entereth in by the door, " is the ſhepherd of the ſheep." Verſ. 4. " He goeth be- " fore them." Verſ. 11. " I am the good ſhepherd: the " good ſhepherd giveth his life for the ſheep." This their King, who goes before them, is oppoſed to man, from whom they flee: for it is added,

And the Lord on the head of them, or, *even Jehovah on their head.* Thus we ſee in the New Teſtament, " God and the " Father,"

" Father," is " God even the Father." And not only here, but in other places where Chriſt is foretold by the prophets under the notion of a ſhepherd, he is expreſsly called Jehovah, Iſ. xl. 10. 11. " Behold, ADONAI JEHOVAH will " come with ſtrong" hand, " and his arm ſhall rule for him: " behold, his reward" is " with him, and his work before " him. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd——." Jer. xxiii. 1.—6.——" Jehovah our righteouſneſs." Therefore Jeſus, applying theſe prophecies to himſelf, calls himſelf God, John x. 27.—33. " My ſheep hear my voice,— " and I give unto them eternal life,—neither ſhall any " pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave" them " me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck" them " out of my Father's hand. I and" my " Father are " one. Then the Jews took up ſtones again to ſtone him. " Jeſus anſwered them, Many good works have I ſhewed " you from my Father; for which of thoſe works do ye " ſtone me? The Jews anſwered him, ſaying, For a good " work we ſtone thee not; but for blaſphemy, and becauſe " that thou, being a man, makeſt thyſelf God." Verſ. 34. to 39. " Jeſus anſwered them,—If he called them gods,— " ſay ye of him, whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent " into the world, Thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe I ſaid, I am " the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, be- " lieve me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, " believe the works; that ye may know and believe that " the Father" is " in me, and I in him. Therefore they " ſought again to take him." And in the view of this the apoſtle ſays to the Epheſian elders, Acts xx. 28. " Take " heed therefore unto yourſelves, and to all the flock,— " to feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with " his own blood."

The Time of Antichriſt's Reign.

DANIEL, chap. vii.	REVELATION, chap. xiii.
Verſ. 3.—Four great beaſts came up from the ſea.	Verſ. 1.—And I ſaw a beaſt riſe up out of the ſea, having ſeven heads, and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns.
Verſ. 7.—Behold, a fourth beaſt,——and it had ten horns.	Verſ. 3. And I ſaw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death; and
Verſ. 8. I conſidered the horns, and behold, there came up	

up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the firſt horns plucked up by the roots: and behold, in this horn eyes like a man, and a mouth ſpeaking great things.

Verſ. 11. I beheld then, becauſe of the voice of the great words which the horn ſpake; I beheld till the beaſt was ſlain, and his body deſtroyed, and given to the burning flame.

Verſ. 19. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beaſt——,

Verſ. 20. — And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that ſpake very great things, whoſe look was more ſtout than his fellows.

Verſ. 21. I beheld, and the ſame horn made war with the ſaints, and prevailed againſt them;

Verſ. 22. Until the Ancient of days came.

Verſ. 23. Thus he ſaid, The fourth beaſt ſhall be the fourth kingdom upon earth——.

Verſ. 24. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that ſhall ariſe: and another ſhall riſe after them, and he ſhall be diverſe from the firſt, and he ſhall ſubdue three kings.

Verſ. 25. And he ſhall ſpeak great words againſt the Moſt High, and ſhall wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and think to change times and laws: and they ſhall be given into his hand, and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beaſt.

Verſ. 5. And there was given unto him a mouth ſpeaking great things, and blaſphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty-two months. (Chap. xii. 14.— The woman is nouriſhed, for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the ſerpent. Chap. xi. 2. 3. —— forty-two months ——, a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days).

Verſ. 6. And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Verſ. 7. And it was given unto him to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Chap. xvii.

Verſ. 3. —I ſaw a woman ſit upon a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, full of names of blaſphemy, having ſeven heads, and ten horns.

Verſ. 8. The beaſt that thou ſaweſt, was, and is not——; and they that dwell on the earth ſhall wonder——, when they behold the beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is.

Verſ. 9. And here is the mind which hath wiſdom. The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains, on which the woman ſitteth.

Verſ. 10. And there are ſeven kings. Five are fallen: and one is: and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he muſt continue a ſhort ſpace.

Verſ. 11. And the beaſt that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the ſeven, and goeth into perdition.

hand, until a time and times, and the dividing of time.

Verſ. 26. But the judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his dominion, to conſume, and to deſtroy it unto the end.

Chap. xii.

Verſ. 6. — How long to the end of theſe wonders?

Verſ. 7 — For a time, times, and an half: and when he ſhall have accompliſhed to ſcatter the power of the holy people, all theſe ſhall be finiſhed.

Verſ. 11. And from the time the continual ſhall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh deſolate ſet up, a thouſand two hundred and ninety days.

Verſ. 12. Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thouſand three hundred and five and thirty days.

Verſ. 13. But go thou thy way till the end; and thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in thy lot at the end of the days.

Verſ. 12. And the ten horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beaſt.

Verſ. 13. Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the beaſt.

Verſ. 14. Theſe ſhall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them——.

Verſ. 17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his mind, and to make one mind, and give their kingdom unto the beaſt, until the words of God ſhall be fulfilled.

Verſ. 18. And the woman which thou ſaweſt, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

2 THESS. ii. 6. 7. 8. And now ye know what with-holdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the myſtery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then ſhall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.

OBS. I. THE Revelation puts it beyond doubt, that Daniel's "fourth kingdom" is the "Roman empire," by adding to Daniel's deſcription of that "fourth "beaſt" that "came up from the ſea," and "had ten "horns," the figure of "ſeven heads:" for it makes theſe "ſeven heads" to be firſt "ſeven hills," whereon is ſet "that great city reigning over the kings of the earth." And then it makes them to be "ſeven kings" ſucceeding one another, whereof five were fallen, and one was when John wrote, and the other was not then come; who, when he ſhould come, would continue but a ſhort ſpace. And theſe are no other than the ſeven different forms of ſupreme power that ſucceeded one another in that great city built on ſeven hills that reigned over the kings of the earth, viz. *kings, conſuls, military tribunes, decemvirs, dictators, emperors*

perors Heathen (reigning when John wrote), and *Chriſtian emperors*; which laſt continued but a ſhort ſpace in compariſon with the former. The Revelation makes Daniel's ten horns of the fourth beaſt (*i. e.* ten kings that ſhould ariſe in that fourth kingdom) to ariſe in conſequence of the fall of the ſeventh head, and to receive power as kings at the ſame time with "the beaſt that was, and is not, and "yet is," who is called "the eighth" head. And theſe are the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided, when it was broken, or wounded to death in the ſeventh head, and yet was united as in an eighth head in place of the ſeventh.

II. The Revelation lays open Daniel's "time, times, "and dividing of time," when this beaſt with ten horns prevails, by making it the ſame with "forty-two months," *i. e.* a year, two years, and half a year. And again, in another paſſage, it makes "forty-two months" the ſame with "one "thouſand two hundred and ſixty days." For 1260 days make 42 months, each conſiſting of 30 days preciſely, which make each year to conſiſt of 360 days; and three ſuch years and a half contain preciſely 1260 days. Thirty days added to this "time, times, and a half," or 1260 days, make the "thouſand two hundred and ninety days;" when, Daniel ſignifies, the "continual" that was taken away ſhall be reſtored, and the ſanctuary cleanſed. And forty-five days added to theſe, make the "thouſand three hundred and "thirty-five days," at the end of which the ſaints ſhall reſt from their labours. Thus the Revelation brings Daniel's "time, times, and a half," to days; and ſo makes it 1260 of theſe 1335 days, at the end of which the ſaints ſhall reſt, and inherit the kingdom. Now, theſe *days* that make up the "time, times, and a half," ſtand each *day* for a *year*, even as do the *days* of which Daniel's *ſeventy weeks* are made up. And we may ſee this way of reckoning ſupported by the greateſt authority, in theſe two texts. Numb. xiv. 34. "After the number of the days in which ye ſearched the "land, forty days (each day for a year) ſhall ye bear your "iniquities, forty years." Ezek. iv. 5. 6. "For I have "laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to "the number of the days, 390 days: ſo ſhalt thou bear the "iniquity of the houſe of Iſrael. And when thou haſt ac- "compliſhed them, lie again on thy right ſide, and thou "ſhalt bear the iniquity of the houſe of Judah 40 days. I "have appointed thee each day for a year."

III. Daniel's "time, times, and a half," begins not before the fall of the seventh head of the beast. For though the Revelation gives us another reckoning of this same number *, beginning long before; yet it places the beginning of the reign of the beast with ten horns making war with the saints, and prevailing against them, in consequence of the wounding to death of the seventh head. For it tells us, that power is given to the beast to continue forty-two months after the healing of that deadly wound. And till the seventh head fell, the eighth could not have place; as the apostle says, "He who now letteth, will let, until he "be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked be "revealed."

This beast with ten horns, continuing 42 months, is "the "beast that was, and is not, and yet is;" the same empire indeed, but not as it was when it brake in pieces, and subdued all, or as it was under the crowned heads, when its power was first employed against the Christian church, (Rev. xii. 3.), and before the crowns were upon the ten horns; for so it is no more, being broke into ten independent kingdoms, when the seventh head fell wounded to death. Yet that wound is healed again in the "eighth," who "is of the "seven," in whom the broken empire stands still united as in a head with ten horns. For the divided empire remained one in the ecclesiastic form that it was brought into by the Christian emperors, who made it a Christian empire. And in that shape it became united, when it was broken and divided into ten kingdoms, and was ruled as one Christian empire, one catholic church, by the clergy in their councils; of whom some were patriarchs, among whom again the bishop of Rome, that capital church, would be considered as chief from the time of the fall of the seventh head. And the "time, times, and a half," is from that time to the time when the fifth vial is poured out on the throne of the beast, to fill his kingdom with darkness, Rev. xvi. 10.

The emblem of the woman, added in the Revelation to that of the beast with ten horns, and called "the great city "reigning over the kings of the earth," points out Rome, or the Roman commonwealth, now turned into a church, and supported in that state by the strength of the ten kings that got power in the broken empire. For that woman is called the *whore*, or false church, pretending to be Christ's spouse,

* See Grave Dialogues betwixt three Free-thinkers: Dialog. VI.

while

while ſhe commits fornication with the kings of the earth; by whoſe power ſhe has peoples, multitudes, and nations of children that were never begot by the incorruptible ſeed of Chriſt's word preached by his apoſtles, who adorn the *woman*, the true church, as "a crown of twelve ſtars." The "time, "times, and a half," or "forty-two months," is the time of the continuance of the beaſt with ten crowned horns ſupporting that whore, before theſe kings *hate her* with whom they had committed fornication, and "make her deſolate "and naked," Rev. xvii. 16.

IV. The Revelation makes no uſe of Daniel's emblem of the *little horn* ariſing among the ten by the fall of three of the firſt, when it ſignifies the time of the beginning of the beaſt's reign that continues forty-two months, or a time, times, and a half: but in place of that little horn, it gives us the beaſt that was, and is not, or the eighth head coming in place of the ſeventh: and it ſays the ſame things of that beaſt that Daniel ſaid of the little horn; it applies them to the beaſt healed of his deadly wound. Now, the Revelation plainly makes the power of this eighth head of the empire to commence at the ſame time, as in *one hour*, with the power of the ten kings in that empire, Rev. xvii. 11. 12. 13.

Daniel deſcribes this eighth head, the clergy heading the Chriſtian empire in place of the emperors, by pointing out the chief of them, the biſhop of Rome, that capital church, who claimed the firſt place among them, as Peter's ſucceſſor, ſitting in the old chief city of the empire, and in whom the ſpirit of the whole clergy appeared in perfection. And he deſcribes this chief of the clergy by the little kingdom that he at length obtained among the ten kings, through the fall of three of them that had poſſeſſed that kingdom before him. For he came to reign in Rome as a little king among the ten, by the fall of the kingdom of the Goths, of the Greeks, and of the Lombards, who reigned ſucceſſively in Italy before him. The laſt of theſe kings fell not till the latter part of the eighth century, which was about 300 years after the firſt kings received power in the broken empire, or after the fall of the ſeventh head, which was in the latter part of the fifth century, when Auguſtulus, the laſt Chriſtian emperor in Rome, was depoſed by Odoacer in the year 476. For after that, the Greek emperor (above whom the biſhop of Rome was then exalting himſelf) could no more be conſidered as the head of the Chriſtian empire, but only

only as one of the ten kings; and that tenth part of the city fell not till the year 1453.

The biſhop of Rome, conſidered as a little horn among the ten, ariſing by the fall of three of the firſt horns, cannot in that view be called the beaſt, and the head of the beaſt with ten horns who received power as kings the ſame hour with him. But Daniel points out that head, even the clergy, ſupported by the ten kings, and ruling their kingdoms, as one Chriſtian empire, one catholic church, by deſcribing him who was conſidered as chief among theſe clergy long before he became a little king among the ten, and by whoſe influence three of the firſt fell to make way for his little kingdom among them. For Daniel repreſents him that became this little horn, as bearing ſway in the *fourth kingdom*, before the three kings fell to give him that little kingdom; as he ſays he *ſubdued them:* and indeed he contributed to their fall, eſpecially the laſt of them. If we conſider this little horn only as a little king among the ten, his look cannot, in this view, be ſaid to be more ſtout than his fellows; nor can that little power be thought ſufficient for all the great things ſaid and done by that horn in Daniel, or by the beaſt, or head of the beaſt with ten horns, in the Revelation. But if we conſider this ſame little horn as chief among the clergy, to whom all the ten kings gave their power, or as the firſt of that body of men, and fit to repreſent the whole of them who ruled the whole Roman empire as one Chriſtian kingdom, after it was broken into ten independent kingdoms; then we ſhall ſee him diverſe from the other kings, looking more ſtout than his fellow-kings, having eyes, and a mouth ſpeaking great things, words againſt the Moſt High, wearing out the ſaints, and ſtudying to change the times and laws which are given into his hand, for "a time, times, and the dividing of time." In this view of him, we may behold the world wondering after him, and power given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; and we may ſee him making war with the ſaints, and overcoming them, ſpeaking great things, and blaſphemies, and continuing "forty-two months." And this had its beginning, according to the Revelation, when the ſeventh head of the Roman empire fell, and ten kings received power in that broken empire. By this we may perceive, that the ſaints ſhall reſt, and inherit the kingdom at the end of 1335 years, beginning at that time. And thus

the

the words that were closed up, and sealed to Daniel, are laid open by the Revelation, at the *end* of the *time, times, and a half.*

CHRIST'S visible CHURCH.

ACTS xiv. 23.

AND when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fastings, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Every church: i. e. every one of the *congregations* in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia. The church of Israel, though a nation, was yet but one congregation, assembling in one place, and all partaking of one altar; even as all the Israel of God, the true church, prefigured by that, draws near to God in the heavenly sanctuary, all partaking of the one, true, heavenly altar, as one congregation. And so is every visible church, representing that true church, which is invisible, as the instituted sign of it, a congregation coming together in one place to eat the Lord's supper. There is the highest ordinance of Christian worship; and there are set all the ordinary Christian church-officers, the *bishops* or *presbyters*, and the *deacons:* and so we behold Christ's visible church only there. It cannot be pretended, by any of the vain disputers upon the foolish questions about the ecclesiastic government of the nations of this world, that there were more Christians in any of those cities, than might assemble in one place to eat the Lord's supper. And there are not two sorts of visible churches in the New Testament.

These churches were congregations of Christ's disciples, or believers in him through the word of his apostles; as it is expressly said here, "When they had preached the gospel "in that city, and had made many disciples, they returned "again to Lystra, and Iconium, and Antioch; confirming "the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in "the faith, and that we must through much tribulation "enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had "ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed "with fastings, they commended them to the Lord, on "whom they believed." The apostles, according to the Lord's

Lord's commiſſion to them, firſt made diſciples by teaching, immediately baptizing the diſciples and their houſes, them and all theirs: and after that, they confirmed them in the faith of the truth that they taught them, joining them together in churches for the obſervation of all things whatſoever the Lord commanded them to teach the diſciples to obſerve; and eſpecially for the obſervation of his new commandment of love one to another for the ſake of the truth dwelling in them; and that they might be companions in ſuffering the hatred of the world for that truth's ſake. The apoſtles therefore looked on all thoſe whom they gathered into churches, or congregations, to eat the Lord's ſupper, as having the truth dwelling in them; and ſo they behoved every one of them to look upon another; ſeeing they could not love one another as brethren in the truth, without acknowledging that truth as dwelling in them. And ſo we ſee the apoſtles, in their writings to the churches, ſuppoſing all their members objects of this brotherly love, and commanding them to put away from among them any one that appeared otherwiſe. They find fault with them for the neglect of any of the offices of this love one to another. They require them all to love one another with this love; and above all things to have fervent charity amongſt themſelves. And they commend them highly, when the love of every one of them all toward each other aboundeth. Chriſt's viſible church, then, is the congregation of thoſe whom the apoſtles could call "the ſaints and faithful in Chriſt Jeſus."

Their joining the diſciples together in the church or congregation aſſembling as one body to eat the Lord's ſupper, ſerved to confirm their ſouls in the faith of the truth that they taught them, and to make them ſtedfaſt in ſuffering for that truth. Thus the diſciples in Jeruſalem appeared ſtedfaſt in the faith, continuing ſtedfaſtly in the doctrine of the apoſtles, and in the fellowſhip, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers. And the apoſtle connects the *order* of the church in *Coloſſe*, with the *ſtedfaſtneſs* of their *faith in Chriſt:* and exhorting the Hebrews to hold faſt the profeſſion of their faith, he directs them not to forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together.

Elders in every church. *Elders* is the Engliſh word for the Greek *preſbyters*. Theſe are called *paſtors* in relation to the church, as a *flock* which they are called to feed. And they cannot be but in a church, as being from the beginning ordained to the diſciples only there. Nor is a church complete

plete in its order, or fully fitted for assembling to eat the Lord's supper, without these elders among them. The apostles exercised this office in the church at Jerusalem from its beginning; and therefore Peter and John expressly call themselves elders. Barnabas joined the disciples at Antioch together, exhorting them all, in whom he saw the grace of God, to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart; but they are not called the church till Saul and he assembled themselves with them. Nor are the companies of the disciples in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, called churches, till the time when Paul and Barnabas ordained them elders. These indeed cannot be without a church; but without them a church wants of its order, and is not completely fitted to answer its end.

These elders or presbyters are all ministers of the word. For, 1. This distinguishes them from the deacons, that they must be "apt to teach, or able, by sound doctrine, both to "exhort, and to convince the gainsayers." And when the ministry of the church is distinguished into these two, *viz.* the *ministry of the word*, and the *ministry of tables*, and the service of tables is the deacons work; the elder, in distinction from the deacon, must be a minister of the word. 2. They are the rulers, governors, and leaders of the church, ποιμενες, κυβερνησεις, ηγεμενοι: and the church of Christ is not to be governed but by his word teaching his disciples to observe what he commanded. They are not to feed the flock of God as lords over them, but as examples of obedience to his commands which they teach them to observe: for they rule among Christ's willing people. The presbyter ruling or presiding well, must therefore be a minister of the word, as well as he that labours in the word of exhortation, and as he that labours in teaching. And as to an elder that is not a minister of the word, we may say his character is not in the New Testament, and he is incapable to rule the church of God.

The elders or presbyters are the same in scripture with bishops. Their character is the same, Tit. i. 5.—9 "For "this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in "order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in "every city, as I had appointed thee. If any be blameless "——. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of "God," &c. compared with 1 Timothy, chap. iii. And their work is the same. The elders are charged with the work of bishops: for as Paul bids the Ephesian elders feed

the flock, the church of God over which they were made bishops; so Peter exhorts the elders to do the bishop's work. They feed the flock, they teach, they rule or preside in the church, and they lay on hands, as one of these presbyteries did on Timothy, whom some have called a bishop. One bishop in the church, set above the presbytery or company of presbyters, is an innovation that crept into the church in the end of the second century, when the presbyter ruling or presiding well in the church, began to be distinguished from the presbytery by the name of *bishop*, which the apostles had made common to all elders (See *view of Aerian heresy, chap.* 1. *sect.* 5.). But, even then, that bishop and presbytery was over a single congregation assembling to, and all partaking of one altar, as it was called: for there was no such thing, till long after that, as a bishop or a presbytery over many congregations, or a church made up by the union of the overseers of many churches.

The apostles did not commit the care of any church to a single presbyter or bishop: for though these churches here may be supposed of the smallest size, Paul and Barnabas ordained a plurality of presbyters in every one of them. So we see a plurality of bishops as well as deacons in Philippi, and of presbyters, whom the apostle calls *bishops*, in the church of the Ephesians. Neither is there any thing like an instance in the New Testament, of a church constitute by the apostles with a single presbyter or a single bishop. And thus, as there was in the *synagogue* a plurality of chief rulers, αρχισυναγωγοι, Acts xiii. 15.; so likewise in the church, which the apostles called "the synagogue of Christians," Heb. 10. 25. James ii. 2. applying the name of one of the rulers of the synagogue to the presiding presbyter in the Christian church, Rev. i. 20. "The angel of the congre-" gation." We have good ground then to suppose, that the apostles ordained to the Christians in Rome a plurality of bishops, as they did in every other city and church; and that Linus, Cletus, and Clemens, whom tradition places in succession as single bishops there, were bishops in that church at the same time. And therefore we find tradition very dark about the succession of the first bishops of Rome.

Paul and Barnabas *ordained them elders*. We have no such instance of the manner of ordaining presbyters or bishops, as we have of the ordination of deacons, Acts vi. And this may let us see the folly and madness of those men, who have been inflamed with so great zeal about the manner of that

that ordination, and have placed so much religion in it, as to make the whole of Christianity to depend on it, and to turn upon it as its hinge. And there are also men, giving but small attention to the great thing that the scripture points out as chiefly to be attended to about the ordination of presbyters, *viz.* their character, who shew great religious zeal about the call of the people, taking it for granted, that their peoples, multitudes, and nations of Christendom, have the same power in this matter that Christ's disciples had in the apostolic churches. There has been much disputing among contending parties in the Christian world, about the election of the Christian people, whether it took place originally in the ordination of presbyters or bishops, as it did in the ordination of the first deacons? And some would make this out of the Greek word that is here rendered *ordained*; contending, that it does not so properly signify the laying on of hands, as election by the stretching out of the hands; which was a manner of voting in Grecian assemblies of the people. It were well, if they were as attentive to plain things clearly said in the New Testament about the order of the first churches, as they have been to the hint that they find given them in this Greek word. But the stress of this matter needs not be laid on this, seeing there was no less importance and concern to the Christian people in the ordination of men to care for their souls, than in the ordination of men to the care of their bodily necessities, and the disposal of their alms; besides that the people behoved to contribute to the sustenance of their presbyters. And as we have no instance in the New Testament of any such deed done by the apostles, in any church, without the consent of the *whole church*; this is enough for every church going forth by the footsteps of Christ's flock. But as for any other sort of societies going under the Christian name; they have nothing to do with this matter. They may walk by their own canons.

As it is not doubted that Paul and Barnabas laid hands on these elders when they were ordained, even as the apostles in Jerusalem laid hands on the first deacons at their ordination; we may observe, that there is no such thing to be seen in the New Testament, as the ordination of any church-officer with the laying on of the hands of any single person. Paul indeed says, he put his hands on Timothy; but as this was to convey an extraordinary gift, so it appears to have been done in one of these same presbyteries that laid hands

on him alſo. And when ſome confidently inquire, Who was with Titus ordaining elders in every city of Crete, if hands were laid on theſe? it may be told them, that this ſtrong queſtion goes upon a ſuppoſition very weak, becauſe it may prove to be falſe, *viz.* that there were no more miniſters of the word, at that time, in Crete to lay on hands: for the apoſtle ſpeaks of Apollos, and of Zenas the lawyer, as with Titus in Crete, when he wrote to him, Tit. iii. 13.

Prayed with faſtings. They prayed at the ordination of theſe elders in each church, as the apoſtles did when they laid hands on the deacons of the church in Jeruſalem, Acts vi. 3. 6. And they faſted in every church when they prayed on this occaſion, even as the presbytery in the church at Antioch joined faſting with prayer when they ſeparated Paul and Barnabas, by the laying on of hands, to that work to which the Holy Ghoſt called them, Acts xiii. 2. 3.

The Lord, in the days of his fleſh, ſignified that his diſciples, when he ſhould be taken from them, would faſt, not as the Phariſees, but in a way more agreeable to their faith, and ſuitable to the ſtate of his church and kingdom of heaven; and that they had not yet the occaſions for this faſting, and were not fit for it, while they were not yet delivered from their prejudice of a ſecular Meſſiah, and a temporal Chriſtian kingdom, Matth. ix. 14.—17. After he was taken from them, they uſed faſting, not only ſecretly, and in their houſes, according to Matth. vi. 16. 17. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 5.; but in the church; as we ſee the prophets and teachers miniſtering to the Lord, and faſting in the church that was at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. 2. It was not their cuſtom indeed to faſt on the Lord's day, the only day of thankſgiving that they obſerved religiouſly. But they faſted on other days, as occaſion ſerved: for we hear not of any fixed annual or weekly faſts obſerved by them; but, as they had opportunity, they miniſtered to the Lord, and faſted. And the deſign of their faſting had no connection with the different intereſts of the kingdoms of this world: it referred to the kingdom of heaven, and the intereſt of that kingdom which is not of this world. The furtherance of the goſpel of that kingdom was the great thing ſought after in theſe ſolemn prayers that were joined with faſting; and that reſpects all nations without difference, which ſhall all hate it to the end. As the miniſtry of the word has the neareſt connection with this great deſign of faſting, it was very proper to join the prayers with faſting on occaſion of ſeparating the

the miniſters of the word to their work. Evils ariſing in the churches, and ſigns of the Lord's diſpleaſure among them, gave them alſo opportunities and calls to mourn. But as to nation riſing againſt nation, and kingdom againſt kingdom, and the evils that make the hearts of worldly men fail for fear of thoſe things that are coming on the world, the Lord commands his diſciples not to be troubled with theſe things. When a king of this world calls his ſubjects to faſt, as the king of Nineveh did his ſubjects, and to pray for him; Chriſtians can faſt in their aſſemblies at any time, except on the Lord's day: and as they are commanded to pray for kings, and all in authority, that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty; they may, on that occaſion, join faſting with theſe prayers. But ſtill, in this faſting, they muſt have chiefly in view the concerns of the kingdom that is not of this world, and the great ſalvation that is common to men of all ranks, and of all nations, without difference: becauſe this is the reaſon why the apoſtle would have prayers to be made for all men, for kings, and all in authority, That God "will have all men "to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

They commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. This they did, when they had ordained them elders in every church, and prayed with faſtings. This was the utmoſt that they could do to them. And having thus completed their order as churches of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they left them, in that order, to his care, and depending on him in whom they believed, to preſerve them in the faith, and lead them thro' much tribulation into his heavenly kingdom. And this is agreeable to what the Lord ſaid to the church of his brethren, with their two or three elders among them, to which the offended brother tells his brother's treſpaſs, Matth. xviii. 18. "Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in "heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be "looſed in heaven." For this makes every ſuch church immediately dependent on heaven, and altogether independent, in binding and looſing, of any power under heaven. Therefore Paul, leaving the Epheſian preſbytery, no more to ſee them, and charging them to take heed to themſelves, and to all the flock, in the foreſight of falſe teachers ariſing among them, or entering among the flock as wolves, does not refer them, in this caſe, to the care of any biſhop or ſuperior judicature; but commends them to God, and to the word of his grace. And the Lord, writing to the churches

of

of Asia, speaks to each of them as having full power to correct evils amongst themselves, and refers them to no superior power but his own; and sets forth himself in relation to them, as "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and "shutteth, and no man openeth;" taking it wholly upon himself to set an open door, that no man can shut, before them keeping his word, and not denying his name. Every church having the scriptures, has now the apostles and prophets, as the Jews had *Moses and the prophets* in the time of our Lord, and needs not seek (as the church in Antioch to Jerusalem, Acts xv.) to any other church, or to any society of men on earth, for any part of the New-testament revelation; which began indeed at Jerusalem, and came out from the church there; but is now perfected, and so complete in the scriptures, that no apostle nor angel from heaven can add any thing to it. Every church of the saints is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, builded together in Christ for an habitation of God through the Spirit; and having his word and Spirit remaining amongst them, they need not go to any other church, or any assembly of church-rulers, to seek the Spirit. When the question is, Who shall keep all the churches in order, and correct any whole church walking disorderly, and doing evil? the bishop of Rome pretends to do it; a general council also pretends to do it; a diocesan bishop and a classical presbytery both pretend to hold many churches in union, and rule them as one church in the ecclesiastic government of the nations of this world. But Jesus Christ, who hath not instituted any such government for the kingdoms of this world, because his kingdom is not of this world, answers the question, as to his own churches, in this manner, "I walk in "the midst of the golden candlesticks, I hold the stars in "my right hand." He rebukes and chastens the churches; and, if they repent not, removes the candlestick, or spues them out of his mouth. And he hath not given this, which he claims as his prerogative, into the hands of any man or society of men, to stand up in his place, and rule his churches; but hath made every one of them, with its own presbytery, or its own college of bishops, immediately dependent on himself; and so independent of all others.

NOTES

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER VI.

CHRIST according to the FLESH and the SPIRIT; JACOB's LADDER; JACOB's PILLAR; The RIGHTEOUSNESS of the LAW and of FAITH; PERFECTED LOVE; MELCHISEDEK; The FIRST LOVE left.

[First published in the year 1756.]

Christ according to the Flesh and the Spirit.

ROM. i. 3. 4.

—— *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, determined the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, of the resurrection of the dead.*

HERE the apostle gives the great subject and sum of the gospel, which God promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures; and that is, Jesus Christ the Son of God, whom the prophets foretold, and the gospel sets forth in a twofold view. 1. "According to the flesh." 2. "According to the Spirit." Agreeably to this he says, 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God was manifested in the flesh, justified "in the Spirit." And the apostle Peter speaks the same way, 1 epist. chap. iii. vers. 18. "Christ — suffered — be- "ing put to death by the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit."

When

When it is said, 2 Cor. v. 16. "Though we have known "Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know no more;" it may lead us to think what is meant by the *flesh*, as it is here opposed to the *spirit:* for it must be a state and condition, wherein Christ was known to have been, and wherein he is not now acknowledged to be. And so it cannot mean corrupt nature, in distinction from the principle of grace; for he was never known to have any thing to do with the corruption of human nature. Nor can it mean the human body, in distinction from the soul; for Christians still acknowledge Christ's body as well as his soul, and hope to be conformed to it at his appearing; even as they acknowledge his humanity, as well as his divinity. And therefore neither can it mean his human nature, in distinction from his divine. Nor yet can it mean the frailty of human nature in its mortal state, in distinction from the state of the resurrection: for the *flesh* must be something, on the account of which men would be acknowledged with respect and esteem; as it is said, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh;" but surely no man would be valued for the frailties, infirmities, and mortality of his body. And we read of the goodliness of all flesh, or the glory of man, that it is as the flower of the grass. And Christians are distinguished from the Jews and Judaisers by this, that they "have no confi-"dence in the flesh, but worship God in the spirit:" But they could not be distinguished from any men confiding in the infirmities of their mortal bodies; and they were not yet in the state of the resurrection, while they were worshipping God in the *spirit*, in opposition to the *flesh*, and to *confiding in the flesh*. Paul had been *trusting in the flesh*, when these things *were gain to him*, Phil. iii. 3.—7. "Circumcised the "eighth day, of the stock of Israel, the tribe of Benja-"min, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, "a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Thus the apostle speaks of the *flesh*, in distinction from the *spirit*, in that same sense wherein he says, Gal. iii. 3. —— "Having begun with the spirit, are ye now made perfect "with the flesh?" Where it is manifest he means the law of Moses, or the covenant from Mount Sinai, in distinction from the gospel, or the new covenant. These two covenants are also distinguished as *letter* and *spirit*; the first covenant being considered as a parable, and the new as the hidden sense, the scope and intendment of it, the spirit of the

the letter in the parable. Thus the miniſtry of the new covenant is called the "miniſtration of the Spirit," in diſtinction from the miniſtry of the law, which is called the *letter*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. 8. Now, Chriſt was known and acknowledged by Chriſtians to "have come in the fleſh," 1 John iv. 2. 3. They acknowledged, that "the Word was made fleſh," or that "God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law;" and that "in the days of his fleſh," or while he was under the law, he "was a miniſter of the "circumciſion for the truth of God, to confirm the promi-"ſes of the fathers."

Now, taking this to be meant by the *fleſh* and the *ſpirit*, as here applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe ſufferings, and the glories after theſe, were the ſubſtance of what the prophets foretold concerning him; we may obſerve what the apoſtle ſays of him, according to theſe two different ſtates of *fleſh* and *ſpirit*, which he oppoſes to one another, that ſo we may have his view of the ſum of the goſpel promiſed afore by the prophets.

1. According to the *fleſh*, *Jeſus Chriſt* was *of the ſeed of David*, the ſon of *David*; but according to the *ſpirit*, he is *of the reſurrection*. Agreeably to what is ſaid, Luke xx. 36. —— "Being the children of the reſurrection." He is the *firſt-begotten*, or *firſt-born of the dead*, according to the ſpirit; for he was "brought again from the dead in the blood of the "everlaſting covenant."

2. According to the *fleſh*, he was the Son of God, made of the ſeed of David; but according to the *ſpirit*, he is determined the Son of God.

Being the Son of God, unmade, uncreated, he was made of the ſeed of David, when God, in the fulneſs of time, foretold by the prophets, ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law. And ſo the eternal Word, by whom all things were made, was made fleſh; and the Son of God became what he was not before, when he who was David's Lord, became his Son.

In the days of his fleſh, he ſhewed himſelf to be the Son of God by the teſtimony of the prophets, applied to him in the teſtimony of John Baptiſt, and the Father's teſtimony from heaven, and by the works of God that he wrought, as the prophets foretold; and at laſt died a martyr to this truth, That he is the Son of God.

But though he was God thus manifeſt in the fleſh, his Godhead was a thing in queſtion, and there was a proceſs

upon it not yet determined in the days of his flesh. For though he manifested his divine glory in the divine works he wrought, and his disciples believed on him; yet he was condemned to death as a blasphemer, for calling himself the Son of God; and his death was insisted on as an evident proof of the falsehood of what he said; yea, his disciples seeing him dead and buried, said, "We trusted that it had "been he which should have redeemed Israel." When the process against his being the Son of God was carried as far as it could go, in his being put to death by the *flesh*; then his becoming the Son of the resurrection, being made alive by the *spirit*, was the final determination of the process for him, clearly distinguishing him as the Son of God, and setting beyond doubt the truth of his saying, "I am the Son "of God."

3. The power of the *spirit* is here opposed to the weakness of the *flesh*. Being of the seed of David according to the flesh, he was the Son of God appearing in weakness; "He was crucified in weakness." But being of the resurrection, he is the Son of God in power, "in the power of "an endless life," in "the power of his resurrection," whereby "he is able to subdue all things to himself." He appears now the Son of God in power, "able to save to the "uttermost all that come to God by him, seeing he ever "liveth to make intercession for them." He appears the Son of God, in the "exceeding greatness" of the might of God's power, which he wrought in him, "when he raised "him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand "in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and "power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is "named, not only in this world, but also in that which is "to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and "gave him to be the head over all things to his church, "which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in "all."

4. The holiness here ascribed to the spirit, is opposed to the impurity of the flesh.

When the Son of God was made of the seed of David, though that which was born of the virgin was holy, yet he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. And though he "knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" yet "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree. For the "Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, who like sheep "had gone astray, making him, who knew no sin, to be "sin

" ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of " God in him." In the days of his fleſh therefore he had himſelf to purify from the guilt of our ſins, imputed to him, and ſeparating him from the light of his Father's countenance, before he could enter into the holieſt of all in the Father's preſence, and be made bleſſed with his countenance. And this he did by the ſacrifice of himſelf, as he ſays, " For " their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, that they alſo may be ſanc- " tified through the truth." For this is the ſanctification of which the apoſtle ſpeaks, when he ſays, " For if the " blood of bulls and of goats, and the aſhes of an heifer, " ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of " the fleſh; how much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, " who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without " ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works to " ſerve the living God?"

JACOB'S LADDER.

JOHN i. 51.

Hereafter ye ſhall ſee heaven open, and the angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man.

HERE Jeſus Chriſt ſets forth himſelf the Son of man, as the truth of that ancient figure, the ladder that Jacob ſaw in his dream at Bethel, Gen. xxviii. 12. —— " And be- " hold, a ladder ſet upon the earth, and the top of it reach- " ed to heaven: and behold, the angels of God aſcending " and deſcending on it." Jeſus taking theſe words, puts " the Son of man" in place of the ladder, and ſo applies what is ſaid of *it* to himſelf. He ſays, that as Jacob ſaw the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on the ladder ſet in the earth, and reaching to heaven; ſo the time was coming, when his diſciples ſhould ſee them aſcending and deſcending on the Son of man.

This was not yet to be ſeen, when Jeſus ſaid this to Nathanael, aſſuring him and the diſciples they ſhould ſee it afterward. And the queſtion then is, When and how ſhall we find this remarkable ſaying of the Lord Jeſus verified? There is a paſſage in the epiſtle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. 9. 10. that can give us direction in this inquiry; where, after ſay-

ing, "We see not yet all things put under him," *viz.* "the "Son of man," verſ. 6. 7. 8. we have theſe words: "But "we see Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the an- "gels, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and "honour, that he by the grace of God ſhould taſte death "for every man. For it became him, for whom are all "things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many "ſons unto glory, to make the captain of their ſalvation "perfect through ſufferings."

Here the Son of man is ſeen made lower than the angels for the ſuffering of death, by the grace of God taſting death for every man, as the ladder ſet in the earth. And here he is ſeen crowned with glory and honour far above the angels, being made perfect through ſufferings, as the ladder and the top of it reaching to heaven. The ſame Son of man is beheld "firſt in the lower parts of the earth," and then "up far above all heavens," Eph. iv. 9. 10. And in beholding him thus, heaven is ſeen opened to us, and an open communication betwixt the earth and heaven by him, as by a ladder.

The angels of God are upon this ladder: for as the angels that fell, "ſtood not in the truth" (John viii. 44.) concerning the Son of man, who is the Son of God; ſo all the angels of God ſtood, and ſtill ſtand in it, being elected as miniſtering ſpirits to the Son of man, to be "ſent forth to mi- "niſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation," Heb. i. 14. And the things about which the great minds of theſe mighty ſpirits are moſt diligently employed, are "the ſuf- "ferings of Chriſt, and the glories after theſe," teſtified beforehand by Chriſt's Spirit in the prophets, and now reported by them who preached the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven: 1 Pet. i. 11. 12. "Which "things the angels deſire to look into."

Looking into the ſufferings, wherein he is lower than they, (for an angel appeared ſtrengthening him in his agony), they muſt deſcend upon him.

And looking into the glories that follow theſe, wherein he reaches far above them, (Eph. i. 21. 1 Pet. iii. 22.), they muſt aſcend upon the Son of man.

Beholding this, we ſee the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on the Son of man.

When, believing the report of them that preached the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, we come to know, that Chriſt, according to the prophecies, hath actually ſuffered theſe things, and is indeed entered into his glory;

glory; and when we view the Son of man, in his sufferings, and the glories after these, uniting earth to heaven, as the way of intercourse between earth and heaven; we then know him to be the Son of God, by much greater evidence than that set before Nathanael, when he at first believed Jesus to be the Son of God; and we see heaven opened to us; and the glory of the true God, who makes the dead alive, and calls things that are not into being, the glory of the just God the Saviour appears, his reconciled face shines, and we can say with Jacob, "This is the gate "of heaven."

JACOB'S PILLAR.

1 TIM. iii. 15.

——*That thou mayst know how thou oughtst to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground* * *of the truth.*

THE church of the living God, which is his house, is here set forth under the notion of a *pillar*; and is so called by the apostle with a plain reference to Jacob's calling the pillar that he set up, the house of God, Gen. xxviii. 22. "This stone, which I have set a pillar, shall be God's "house."—— And because the first thing called the house of God in scripture, was a pillar; it was very proper for the apostle, speaking of the church as the house of God, to call it the pillar.

While he is directing Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the church of the Ephesians, by calling it the house of God, the pillar, he brings to mind what Jacob said, when he awaked from the dream he had on that same stone, Gen. xxviii. 16. 17. 18. "Surely the Lord is in this "place.—— How dreadful is this place! This is none o-"ther but the house of God, and this is the gate of hea-"ven." And so he lets Timothy know what sort of regard he should have to the church in Ephesus; even as he also taught the presbyters or bishops of that same church, how they ought to regard it, when he said to them, Acts xx. 28. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the

* Gr. ἑδραίωμα, establishment.

"flock

" flock——to feed the church of God, which he hath pur-
" chaſed with his own blood." Whatever the notion be under which the church is ſet forth, it is ſtill venerable by its peculiar connection with God. And the ſame regard is due to every church or congregation of the ſaints, that belonged to that church of the Epheſians, or that Jacob ſhewed to Bethel.

From the ſtone that Jacob ſet for a pillar, anointing it, and calling it *Bethel*, (*i. e.* God's houſe), came that ancient practice amongſt the Gentiles, of ſetting up, anointing, and worſhipping at thoſe rough ſtones, which were called *Bætulia*, βαιτυλια, or βαιτυλα; what was originally remarkable in the worſhip of the true God, being applied by them to their idols, whoſe preſence they ſuppoſed at thoſe pillars.

Iſaiah, foretelling the worſhip of the true God in Egypt, ſays, Iſ. xix. 19. 20. " In that day ſhall there be an altar to
" the Lord, in the midſt of the land of Egypt, and a pillar
" at the border thereof to the Lord. And it ſhall be for a
" ſign and for a witneſs to the Lord of hoſts in the land of
" Egypt."

Before there was any tabernacle or temple built as God's houſe, we ſee Moſes, at the ratification of God's covenant with Iſrael, Exod. xxiv. 4. 5. " builded an altar under the
" hill, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of
" Iſrael," offering ſacrifices there. And when the temple became the houſe of God, it did not ſet aſide this uſe of pillars: for the two pillars Jachin and Boaz were ſet up before the temple at the porch of the houſe, and ſo not far from the altar of burnt-offering. The apoſtle ſeems to refer to the names of theſe pillars, importing *eſtabliſhment* and *ſtrength*, when, naming the church the pillar, he calls it the " eſta-
" bliſhment (ἑδραίωμα) of the truth." This ſeems alſo to be referred to in that promiſe, Rev. iii. 12. " Him that over-
" cometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God."
To which agrees 1 Pet. v. 10. " But the God of all grace,
" who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus,
" after that ye have ſuffered a while, make you perfect,
" ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you." Theſe pillars did not ſerve to the purpoſe of ſupporting any thing: they were not ſet for upholding any building upon them; yet eſtabliſhment and ſtrength is aſcribed to them. And here this is ſaid to be with reſpect to the truth.

This truth muſt be the ſame that is commonly called *the truth* in the New Teſtament; even that eminent and diſtinguiſhing

tinguiſhing truth of the goſpel which Jeſus told to the Jews he had *heard of God*, which the Father gave him, and he gave to his diſciples, the Father's teſtimony of him at John's baptiſm, and on the holy mount, *viz.* "This is "my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed." The apoſtle expreſſeth the truth here in this manner, "God was "manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit, *&c.*; pointing it out as the ſenſe of the prophetical figures, and ſo calling it *the myſtery*.

To this truth the church owes its being: for by this it is diſtinguiſhed from the world, and united in itſelf, John xvii. 14. 16. 20. 21. And this is the motto of the true church, Jer. xxxiii. 16. Its eſtabliſhment and ſtrength conſiſts in this truth, Matth. xvi. 16. 18. "Thou art Chriſt, "the Son of the living God. — Upon this rock I will build "my church."

But the truth is alſo eſtabliſhed in the church. For, 1. Though it be publiſhed in the world, yet it is diſputed and deſpiſed by the world. But in the church it is *moſt firmly believed*, is *without controverſy* there; and is there, without controverſy, *great*. 2. The truth is confirmed in the church; which, where-ever it appears, is a ſtanding proof of it. The "work and labour of love" in the church "for the truth's "ſake which dwelleth in us," demonſtrates that truth to the world, and is "for a ſign and witneſs of it." And the truth is confirmed in them who are "ſealed with that holy "Spirit of promiſe, the Spirit of the truth."

The church anſwers to that uſe of pillars which was for remembrance, as Abſalom's pillar, "to keep his name in "remembrance;" and *Ebenezer*, the ſtone of help, ſet up in remembrance of the deliverance the Lord wrought for Iſrael: for this is the language of the church to Chriſt, Pſal. xlv. 17. "I will make thy name to be remembered in "all generations." The chief ordinance of worſhip in a church of the ſaints, is the Lord's ſupper; the chief end of their "coming together is to eat the Lord's ſupper;" and the church continues ſtedfaſtly "doing this in remembrance "of him, ſhewing the Lord's death till he come;" thereby confirming and eſtabliſhing the truth.

And ſo the church is the pillar and eſtabliſhment of the truth, by which it is the houſe of God, who dwells in them in whom this truth dwells.

The

The Righteouſneſs of the Law and of Faith.

ROM. x. 5.—10.

—— *For Moſes deſcribeth the righteouſneſs which is of the law, That the man which doth thoſe things, ſhall live in them. But the righteouſneſs which is of faith, ſpeaketh on this wiſe, Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? (that is, to bring Chriſt down); or, Who ſhall deſcend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead). But what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach, That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.*

THE righteouſneſs which is of the law, is the obedience a man gives for himſelf to the law, intitling him thereby to life; but the righteouſneſs which is of faith, is that which is believed, upon God's teſtimony, to have been wrought by Chriſt, the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every believer; who came down from heaven to fulfil the law for ſinners, and is raiſed from the dead, as having fulfilled it. We have the righteouſneſs of the law by working it for ourſelves; by doing thoſe things, to live in them. But we have the righteouſneſs of faith, not by working or doing, but by believing what Chriſt hath wrought, what he hath done for ſinners.

The reward of the righteouſneſs which is of the law, is *life* to him that doth thoſe things: but the reward of the righteouſneſs which is of faith, is *ſalvation* to ſinners, deliverance from the curſe of the law, life from the dead, even the life which he liveth whom God hath raiſed from the dead.

The apoſtle ſets forth both theſe ways of righteouſneſs; that by doing, and this by believing, as deſcribed by Moſes.

And, 1. His deſcription of the righteouſneſs which is of the law, is found in Lev. xviii. 5.; where, ſpeaking in the name of the Lord, he ſaith, "Ye ſhall—keep my ſtatutes "and my judgments; which if a man do, he ſhall live in "them." And the apoſtle giveth it thus, "The man which "doth

" doth thoſe things, ſhall live in them." And likewiſe, Gal. iii. 12. " And the law is not of faith; but the man " which doth thoſe things, ſhall live in them." This that was ſaid by Moſes, which the apoſtle calls the deſcription of the righteouſneſs of the law, in oppoſition to that of faith, is made very remarkable by the prophet's referring to it, Ezek. xx. 11. " And I gave them my ſtatutes, and " ſhewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he ſhall " even live in them." verſ. 13. —— " My ſtatutes and my " judgments, which if a man do, he ſhall even live in " them." verſ. 21. —— " My ſtatutes —— my judgments " —— which if a man do, he ſhall even live in them." Neh. ix. 29. —— " Thy commandments — thy judgments, " which if a man do, he ſhall live in them." But it is eſpecially remarkable by our Lord's reference to it, Luke x. 25.—28. " And behold, a certain lawyer ſtood up, and " tempted him, ſaying, Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit " eternal life? He ſaid unto him, What is written in the " law? how readeſt thou? And he anſwering, ſaid, Thou " ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with " all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength, and with all thy " mind, and thy neighbour as thyſelf. And he ſaid unto " him, Thou haſt anſwered right; this do, and thou ſhalt " live." By this we ſee, the man that doth thoſe things ſo as to live in them, is he that perfectly loveth God and his neighbour: and he that keepeth God's ſtatutes, or commandments, and judgments, is he alone that loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, ſoul, and mind, and his neighbour as himſelf. And the man that doth this, can never die by the law, but muſt live for ever.

2. The apoſtle alſo ſheweth us the righteouſneſs of faith deſcribed, though more darkly, by Moſes. He ſpake plainly of the righteouſneſs of the law, and deſcribed it in words that needed no explication. But the apoſtle explains him ſpeaking of the righteouſneſs of faith; and ſo takes away the veil from his face, that we may plainly ſee the end of his law. The words of Moſes that he brings to this purpoſe, are, (Deut. xxx. 11.—14.): " For this command- " ment, which I command thee this day, is not hidden " from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that " thou ſhouldſt ſay, Who ſhall go up for us to heaven, and " bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Nei- " ther is it beyond the ſea, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, Who ſhall " go over the ſea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may

" hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh thee, in " thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayſt do it." The apoſtle declareth this to be the language of the righteouſneſs of faith, in oppoſition to that of the law, as he explains it thus.

That *word* which Moſes ſaid *is nigh*, he ſays " is the word " of faith which we preach." For Moſes had, in that paſſage, pointed out them to whom he ſaid the word is very nigh, verſ. 6. " And the Lord thy God will circumciſe thine " heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord thy " God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, that thou " mayſt live." He therefore ſaid, the word is nigh to the true Iſrael, the circumciſed in heart, whoſe heart is made anſwerable to that " ſign of circumciſion," which was " a " ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith." He did not ſay, the word is very nigh the ſtiff-necked, and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, always reſiſting the Holy Ghoſt, by their oppoſition to that righteous One, perſecuting all the prophets who foretold his coming, and betraying and murdering him when he came. To ſuch Moſes ſaid, Deut. x. 16. " Circumciſe therefore the foreſkin of your heart, and be " no more ſtiff-necked." But unto the true Iſrael, circumciſed in heart, he ſaid, " The word is very nigh thee, in " thy mouth, and in thy heart." And the apoſtle declares this to be the word of faith, in his mouth who confeſſeth with his mouth *the Lord Jeſus*, and in his heart who believeth in his heart " that God hath raiſed him from the dead:" for this is that which man believeth with the heart unto righteouſneſs, and confeſſeth with the mouth unto ſalvation. This *believing* and *confeſſing* is ſtated in oppoſition to " ſaying in the heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? (that " is, to bring Chriſt down); or, Who ſhall deſcend into " the deep? (that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the " dead);" which is ſaying, that Chriſt came not down from heaven to ſave ſinners, by fulfilling the law for them; and that he is not raiſed from the dead, as having done it.

The commandment that Moſes ſaid he commanded, is heard in the word of faith which the apoſtles preached, declaring that commandment fulfilled in Chriſt's obedience to the death, who is the end of the law, whom God hath raiſed from the dead, as having finiſhed that work he gave him to do. We, who did not thoſe things, hear, that the Lord Jeſus hath done them for ſinners. And ſo, when we have this word of faith in our mouth, confeſſing the Lord Jeſus, and

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in our heart, believing that God raiſed him from the dead, the commandment that he fulfilled is very nigh unto us, in our mouth and in our heart.

Moſes ſaid, it is "very nigh unto thee — that thou mayſt "do it." For, 1. He that hath the word of faith in his mouth, confeſſing it, and in his heart, believing it, is accounted as doing what he is believing to be done for ſinners by "the Lord Jeſus, who is the end of the law for righ-"teouſneſs to every believer." His "righteouſneſs is im-"puted without works" to him that believeth. "For, to "him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſti-"fieth the ungodly, his faith" (or what he believeth) "is "counted for righteouſneſs." And ſo "with the heart "man believeth unto righteouſneſs." 2. None of mankind, but they alone who thus believe unto righteouſneſs, give any true obedience to the commandment requiring love to God and our neighbour. For Moſes ſaid, this love in us, which is the doing of the commandment, is the effect of the Lord's circumciſing our hearts. To which the apoſtle ſays agreeably, "The end of the commandment is "charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conſcience, "and of faith unfeigned." And they that wait for the hope of the righteouſneſs of faith, expect to be perfected in this charity, or love, which is the fulfilling of the law.

PERFECTED LOVE.

1 JOHN. ii. 7. 8.

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him, and in you; becauſe the darkneſs is paſt, and the true light now ſhineth.

THE commandment of brotherly love was not new to Chriſtians at this time, when John was writing to them about it: for they had heard it from the beginning of the goſpel, as he writes, chap. iii. 11. "This is the meſſage "that ye heard from the beginning, that we ſhould love "one another:" which is the ſame thing that we have in

these words, "The old commandment is the word which "ye have heard from the beginning."

But he calls that same commandment again *new*: and this in like manner as the Lord said, he would drink of the cup in his supper *new* with his disciples in his Father's kingdom, or the New-testament church: for he holds communion with them in his supper in a new and more excellent manner, by the Comforter, the Spirit of adoption, which was not given them till he was glorified, and till his heavenly kingdom took place, in consequence of his resurrection.

When the Lord first gave the commandment of love to his disciples, the love of God was not yet perfected, as John says it now is, vers. 5. "Whoso keepeth his word, in "him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know "we that we are in him." Love is perfected in enjoyment.

Though Jesus Christ loved God perfectly in the extremity of his sufferings, yet he did not then enjoy God; he was not happy delighting in him, while his soul was sorrowful unto death by the hiding of his face. The exceeding greatness of his love to God made his sorrow exceeding great. But the love of God, therefore, was not perfected in his soul, as love is perfected in enjoyment, till the Father shewed him the path of life, and made him full of joy with his countenance. When the love of God was thus perfected in him, they that believed in his name, and loved one another, as he gave them commandment, became partakers with him in this perfected love. The love of God was shed abroad in their hearts by the *Holy Ghost*, which was given to them: and hereby they knew, that they were in him. By this the commandment of love, which they had from the beginning, became new to them: for now they loved one another, rejoicing in the truth, and in one another for the sake of the truth dwelling in them; and that sorrow wherein they were companions together, when he was leaving them, no more filled their hearts.

This perfected love, which makes the command of love one to another new, is *true* in Jesus Christ, in whom the love of God is perfected, according to Psal. xlv. 7. and Heb. i. 9. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: "therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil "of gladness above thy fellows." And it is true in them who partake with him in that oil of gladness, as the apostle here says, vers. 20. 21. "But ye have an unction from "the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not writ-

"ten

" ten unto you, becauſe ye know not the truth: but be-
" cauſe ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." And verſ. 27. " The anointing which ye have received of him—
" is truth, and is no lie."

The Spirit of the truth, promiſed as the Comforter, which Jeſus (being by the right hand of God exalted) received of the Father, and ſhed forth on his diſciples, is no deluſion; but the higheſt and utmoſt evidence of the truth that God teſtifies of his Son, that he is well pleaſed in him. It is ſo in him, and in them, who hereby know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth. It aſſures him, with exceeding joy, and the greateſt confidence of glorying, of the truth which he believed and ſpake, when he was greatly afflicted, that he is the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleaſed. And it aſſures them that believe in his name, and love one another, as he commanded, witneſſing with their ſpirits, that God is well pleaſed with them in his Son, by whoſe obedience to the death for them, they are reconciled to him as his children. And by this we may underſtand what the apoſtle ſays, chap. iv. 12.—18. " If we love one ano-
" ther, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.
" Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us,
" becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have ſeen
" and do teſtify, that the Father ſent the Son the Saviour
" of the world. Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the
" Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And
" we have known and believed the love that God hath in
" us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth
" in God, and God in him. In this love is perfected with
" us, that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment:
" becauſe as he is, ſo are we in this world. There is no
" fear in love; but perfect love caſteth out fear: becauſe
" fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect
" in love."

Becauſe the darkneſs is paſt. This is that darkneſs of which the Lord ſpake, when he ſaid, (Luke xxii. 53.) " This is
" your hour, and the power of darkneſs." He was in this darkneſs, when he ſuffered the hiding of the Father's face, being in an agony, and exceeding ſorrowful unto death, through the ſenſe of divine wrath due to the ſins of his people, as darkneſs filling his ſoul. The apoſtle ſays, this darkneſs is paſt. The divine wrath is turned away from him; and the ſins and iniquities of his people, for whom he ſuffered, are remembered no more. And this is what was fore-

told

told by the prophet Iſaiah, chap. xii. verſ. 1. " And in that " day thou ſhalt ſay, O Lord, I will praiſe thee: though " thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, " and thou comfortedſt me." And chap. liv. 7. 8. 9. " For " a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great " mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my " face from thee, for a moment; but with everlaſting kind- " neſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Re- " deemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for " as I have ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhould no more " go over the earth; ſo have I ſworn that I would not be " wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee."

And the true light now ſhineth. The glory of the true God now ſhineth in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, the true and perfect image of the inviſible God. And the light of the divine countenance now ſhineth in the ſoul of the man Chriſt Jeſus, from whom it was hid in the hour and power of darkneſs. This is the light that ſhineth alſo in them who believe on his name, and love one another, as he gave commandment; for they partake with him in this, beholding his glory, and walking in the light of God's countenance. Therefore the apoſtle ſays, (verſ. 9. 10. 11.) " He that ſaith he is " in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkneſs even " until now. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the " light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling in him. " But he that hateth his brother, is in darkneſs, and walk- " eth in darkneſs, and knoweth not whither he goeth; " becauſe that darkneſs hath blinded his eyes."

MELCHISEDEK.

HEB. vi. 19. 20. —— *Within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, Jeſus, made an high prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedek.*

Chap. vii. 1.—8. *For this Melchiſedek, king of Salem, prieſt of the moſt high God, who met Abraham returning from the ſlaughter of the kings, and bleſſed him; to whom alſo Abraham gave a tenth part of all; firſt being by interpretation king of righteouſneſs; and after that alſo, king of Salem, which is, king of peace; without father, without mother, without deſcent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a prieſt continually. Now, conſider*

ſider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the ſpoils. —— *But he whoſe deſcent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and bleſſed him that had the promiſes. And without all contradiction, the leſs is bleſſed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he, of whom it is witneſſed, that he liveth.*

THE apoſtle is here ſhewing the excellency of Chriſt's prieſthood above that of Aaron, by the great dignity and excellency of Melchiſedek, after whoſe order or ſimilitude he is made prieſt. And all that he ſays of the greatneſs of this perſon is taken from the narration of Moſes, Gen. xiv. 18. 19. 20. to which Pſal. cx. 4. refers. And there is the only account the Old Teſtament gives of him, in theſe words. "And Melchiſedek, king of Salem, brought "forth bread and wine: and he was the prieſt of the moſt "high God. And he bleſſed him, and ſaid, Bleſſed be "Abram of the moſt high God, poſſeſſor of heaven and "earth: and bleſſed be the moſt high God, which hath de-"livered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him "tithes of all."

When the apoſtle makes Chriſt, in his prieſthood, the antitype of Melchiſedek, he ſets him forth to us in this view, *viz.* as entered within the vail, made higher than the heavens, ſet down on the right hand of the throne of the Majeſty there, and no more on earth, where he could not be a prieſt; nor having infirmity, as in the days of his fleſh; but perfected for evermore. And this anſwers to the time and ſituation, wherein Pſal. cx. points him out as made high prieſt by the word of the oath. It was then when it was ſaid to him, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine e-"nemies thy footſtool." It was then that he became "a "prieſt on his throne," being ſet there to reign as king of righteouſneſs, and king of peace. This heavenly man, the firſt-begotten, or firſt-born of the dead, being now the ſon of the reſurrection, is without any human father or mother, and without deſcent from any race of mortals: for "though "we have known Chriſt after the fleſh; yet now hence-"forth know we him no more." And as he was before John Baptiſt, and before Abraham, and before the world, ſo, having become an immortal man, he abideth a prieſt continually, ever living to make interceſſion.

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The apoſtle ſhews the dignity and excellency of him, after whoſe order Jeſus is made a prieſt for ever, 1. By the interpretation of his name and title, king of righteouſneſs, king of peace. 2. By his appearing greater than the patriarch Abraham who had the promiſes, the greateſt man with God upon earth. 3. By his being without father or mother, without deſcent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but abiding a prieſt continually. It is commonly thought, that the apoſtle draws this from the ſilence of the ſcripture about the father or mother, birth or death of ſo great a man, making no mention of any race of prieſts, from whom this grand prieſt was deſcended, nor of his ever leaving room for a ſucceſſor by his death. But the apoſtle ſeems to ſay, that theſe things are not mentioned, becauſe there were no ſuch things about that great perſon, to be written, or ſpoke of; for he ſays there, he received tithes, of whom it is witneſſed, that he liveth. Suppoſe it might be ſaid, upon his appearance, in the narration of Moſes, without any mention of his birth or death, that he was without beginning of days, or end of life; yet this cannot be imagined a ſufficient ground for ſaying, it is witneſſed of him that he liveth. Is the ſilence of Moſes about his death, no leſs than his teſtimony, that his life is endleſs? The apoſtle therefore is plainly ſaying, that he of whom the apoſtles teſtified in the goſpel, that he liveth eternally from the dead, is the ſame perſon who received tithes from Abraham. And indeed there cannot be two in this order of prieſthood; for Melchiſedek abiding a prieſt continually, hath no ſucceſſor. And this gave ground to that ancient opinion concerning Melchiſedek among Chriſtians, who looked on the inſpired apoſtle as an infallible interpreter of the word of prophecy, *viz.* that he was the Son of God himſelf appearing in human likeneſs to Abraham, thereby foreſhewing what he was really to be in the fulneſs of time; appearing at that time in the likeneſs of the immortal high prieſt of the Moſt High, poſſeſſor of heaven and earth, even as he alſo appeared to him at the deſtruction of Sodom, in the likeneſs of the judge of the whole earth.

Epiphanius, writing in the fourth century againſt all hereſies, confutes the Melchiſedecians, (her. 55.), who maintained, that Melchiſedek was a greater than Chriſt, and thought Chriſt a perſon inferior to him, as being after his order. And while he is doing this, he takes occaſion to ſpeak of ſeveral opinions concerning Melchiſedek, who he

was,

was. And having mentioned the opinion of Hierax a heretic, who said he was the Holy Ghost; and the opinion of the Samaritans, who said he was Shem the son of Noah; and likewise of Jews, who said he was a just and a good priest of the Most High, but being the son of a harlot, his mother was not written, nor his father known; he then proceeds to say thus. "Further, in the church some speak differently concerning this Melchisedek; for some think, "that he himself, who is by nature the Son of God, appeared at that time in human likeness to Abraham. But "they also fall short of the purpose; for none could ever "be like to himself; as divine scripture hath it, *Being made "like unto the Son of God, he abideth a priest continually.* —— "*For truly he, whose descent is not counted from them, received "tithes of Abraham.* For seing his descent is not counted "from Israelites themselves, it must be counted from other "men." Epiphanius, it seems, could not understand how the likeness of a man, meeting Abraham here, or coming to him before the destruction of Sodom, could be like the real man Christ Jesus; because this real man is no other than the same person, who is supposed to have appeared in human likeness. And so it either cannot be said, that he appeared in human likeness to Jacob, to Moses, to Joshua, and to Ezekiel; or it cannot be said, that the Son of God's becoming man, is the truth of those appearances, and of the appearance of the likeness of JEHOVAH's glory, which was the likeness as the appearance of a man upon a throne; for, according to his reasoning, this would be very absurd. And he concludes, that Melchisedek's descent was counted from some other people, by its not being counted from Israelites; though divine scripture hath it, that he was *without descent*. But he declares his own opinion clearly enough, in arguing against the Melchisedecian heretics: for against them he says, "It is said, *Made like unto the Son of "God, he abideth a priest continually.* But if he be made like "to the Son of God, he is not equal to the Son of God: "for how can the servant be equal to his lord? For Mel"chisedek was a man. But that he is said to be *without fa"ther, without mother*, it is not said for his not having fa"ther or mother, but for their not being manifestly named "in scripture."

Having considered Epiphanius, we may next see what is to be learned of Melchisedek from the ancient writers that were before him.

And, firſt, Juſtin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho, ſays, on Pſal. cx. 4. "God, with an oath, for your incredulity, declared him to be a high prieſt after the order of Melchiſedek. That is, as Melchiſedek is written by Moſes to have been the prieſt of the Moſt High, and he was prieſt of the uncircumciſed, and bleſſed Abraham in circumciſion, bringing tithes to him; in like manner God ſhewed, that his eternal prieſt, alſo called Lord by the Holy Ghoſt, would belong to the uncircumciſed; and as to them in circumciſion, approaching to him, *i. e.* believing in him, and aſking bleſſings from him, them alſo he will receive and bleſs." This father did not reflect, that Abram was not yet circumciſed, when Melchiſedek met him. However, it is plain, he ſuppoſes him a prieſt of God amongſt the uncircumciſed Canaanites, and believes him a type of Chriſt.

But let us next ſee how Theophilus of Antioch talks of Melchiſedek, in his 2d book to Aytolycus. He ſays, "In that time there was a juſt king named *Melchiſedek*, in the city Salem, which is now Jeroſolyma. He was the firſt prieſt of all the prieſts of the moſt high God. From him the city was named Jeruſalem, which before was called Jeroſolyma. From him alſo were found they that became prieſts on all the earth. Now, after him reigned Abimelech in Gerar, and after him another Abimelech. Then reigned Ephron alſo, called the Hittite." It ſeems he alſo thought him a Canaanitiſh king. But his notion of his prieſthood, and of his city, is extraordinary.

Then Tertullian, writing againſt the Jews, ſays, "In fine, the following patriarchs were uncircumciſed, as Melchiſedek, as he, who being uncircumciſed, offered bread and wine to Abraham, who was now circumciſed, returning from battle." And againſt Marcion, book 5. chap. 9. he ſays, on Pſal. cx. 4. "*Thou art a prieſt for ever*; but Hezekiah was neither a prieſt, nor for ever, although he had. *After the order*, ſaith he, *of Melchiſedek*. What is Hezekiah to Melchiſedek, the prieſt of the Moſt High, and indeed not circumciſed, who bleſſed circumciſed Abraham, when the oblation of the tithes was accepted? But the order of Melchiſedek will agree to Chriſt; becauſe indeed Chriſt, the proper and lawful high prieſt of God, being then conſtituted the chief prieſt of the uncircumciſed prieſthood among the nations, of whom he held it more to be received, ſhall, when he cometh at laſt,

"vouchſafe

" vouchsafe acceptance and benediction to the circumcision " and nation of Abraham, that shall sometime know him." Thus he tells us the same thing we heard before from Justin; supposing, with him, that Abram was circumcised when Melchisedek met him, and making the same use of that false supposition.

But Cyprian, coming after him, speaks of Melchisedek in a quite different manner, in his epistle to Cæcilius, concerning the sacrament of the Lord's cup, against those who used only water in that cup. He says, " Noah drank not " water, but wine, and expressed the image of the Lord's " passion. We see likewise the sacrament of the Lord's sa- " crifice prefigured in the priest Melchisedek, according to " what the scripture testifies and says, *And Melchisedek king* " *of Salem brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of* " *the most high God,* and *blessed Abraham.* But that Melchi- " sedek should bear the type of Christ, the Holy Ghost de- " clares in the Psalms, saying, from the person of the Fa- " ther to the Son, *Before the morning-star have I begotten thee.* " *The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for e-* " *ver after the order of Melchisedek.* Which order certainly " is this, coming from that sacrifice, and descending from " thence, That Melchisedek was the priest of the most " high God; that he offered bread and wine; that he bless- " ed Abraham: for who is more the priest of the most high " God than our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered a sacrifice " to God the Father? And he offered that same which " Melchisedek had offered, that is, bread and wine, to " wit, his own body and blood. And that preceding bless- " ing about Abraham pertained to our people: for if Ab- " raham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righ- " teousness, certainly whoever believes God, and lives by " faith, is found righteous, and is shewed long ago in " faithful Abraham, blessed and justified, as the blessed a- " postle Paul proves. —— That therefore the blessing about " Abraham, in Genesis, might be duly celebrated, by the " priest Melchisedek, there goeth before, the image of " the sacrifice of Christ, constituted, to wit, in bread and " wine. Which thing the Lord perfecting and fulfilling, " offered bread, and the cup mixed with wine. And he, " who is the fulness, fulfilled the law of the prefigured " image." Here is a new scene opened, in the middle of the third century. Cyprian makes Melchisedek a type of Christ, especially in a thing whereof neither the apostle,

nor the writers concerning Melchiſedek before his time, took any notice. And whereas Tertullian took his bringing forth bread and wine to be his offering it to Abraham; Cyprian takes the ſcripture to be ſaying, that he offered it to God as a ſacrifice, thereby preparing for the bleſſing of Abraham. He miſtook in this, from which he drew his myſtical conſequence. For though, from Melchiſedek's being a prieſt, it ſhould be inferred, that the bread and wine he brought forth to Abraham, might be the remains of a ſacrifice; yet the ſcripture ſpeaks not of any ſuch action of that prieſt as ſacrificing or offering any thing to God, but only of his bleſſing God for Abraham, and interceding with God for the bleſſing to him, when he brought forth bread and wine to him; thus interpoſing himſelf betwixt God and Abraham, who paid him tithes as his interceſſor with God. And this is what the apoſtle points to, when he ſays of Chriſt, as the antitype of Melchiſedek, that "he ever li-"veth to make interceſſion for them that come unto God "by him." But further, Cyprian makes not this oblation of bread and wine, which he ſays Melchiſedek offered to God, a type of Chriſt's once offering up himſelf, or of the oblation he brought into the holieſt of all, the ſacrifice by which he intercedes with God for ever; but he makes it the type of ſome oblation he ſuppoſes him to have made of bread and mixed wine, *i. e.* his body and blood, in the inſtitution of the euchariſt. And here is the foundation of the ſacrifice of the maſs laid by Cyprian, and the original of an order of prieſts pretending to ſucceed Chriſt in his Melchiſedecian prieſthood, and offering again, or repeating continually, the ſame ſacrifice he offered, when he perfected and fulfilled the truth of Melchiſedek's ſacrifice: though "he needeth not daily to offer up ſacrifice—for—ſins: for "this he did once, when he offered up himſelf;" and, as Melchiſedek, he ever liveth to make interceſſion by that one offering once made; and though there be no ſucceſſion in the order of Melchiſedek, whoſe prieſthood, becauſe he continueth ever, is unchangeable, and cannot paſs from one to another.

It doth not appear, that any ſuch notions as theſe of Cyprian were entertained by thoſe Chriſtians who maintained, that Melchiſedek was the Son of God himſelf appearing in human likeneſs to Abraham, as Epiphanius informs us. For they could not think of Melchiſedek as a mortal man prefiguring Chriſt, or any action of his in the days of his fleſh, while

while he had infirmity, and before he was perfected for evermore. And after all that these ancient writeres have said, differently from them, concerning Melchisedek, we may say, they have not offered us any sufficient help to confute them.

Cunæus, a learned man in the last age, laboured to revive that ancient opinion among-the moderns, in his treatise of the republic of the Hebrews. And in this he has been opposed by Basnage, chiefly with this objection, How can one imagine, that the Son of God received from Abraham the helmets, the tents, the horses, and spoils of the kings that were overcome? how did the Logos dispose of all these things? Did he restore them to Abraham, or leave them undisposed of, when he returned into heaven? And how then could this learned man imagine, that the Logos, with the two angels, received from Abraham the dressed calf, the cakes, the butter, and the milk; how they disposed of these things, how they fed on them, and what became of them when they returned to heaven? But the Jews believed these to be angels; while they all agree, that Melchisedek was one of the kings of Canaan. And Basnage, agreeing with them, alledges, it plainly appears from the narration of Moses, and abstract from the apostle's use of it, no one would have thought of making an angel of him, much less a God. But then, apologising for the apostle's leading men to think differently from the Jews, by drawing mystical consequences from what was done by that prince, and representing him as a type of the Messiah, he labours to bring the apostle to an agreement with his Jews, in this manner. "That priest and king, whose ancestors and posterity were "altogether unknown, was accounted among the Jews of "that time a kind of eternal man. No body knew from "whence he came, nor how he died: no body knew the "names of those who preceded or succeeded him in his "priesthood. He was only known from the history of "Moses, who represented him as a greater man than Abraham. The two first circumstances being looked upon "by the Jews as very singular, and in some measure miraculous, or, at least, the interpretation of the mystical eternity being admitted by the Jewish doctors of that time, "the consequence which St Paul drew from thence, to shew "the excellency of Melchisedek's and Christ's priesthood "above the Levitical, was so natural, that no body could "deny it." If there were any evidence for this, that the Jews

Jews then accounted him a kind of eternal man, &c. it must be owned, they thought very grandly of their Canaanitish king. But it doth not shew the greatest respect to the apostle, as inspired to declare the mystery of the Old-testament figures, and to interpret the prophets by the same Spirit that inspired them, to represent him as an ordinary reasoner upon the scripture, or as a private interpreter of the word of prophecy; and not only so, but as interpreting the Old Testament by Jewish tradition *.

But what necessity had Paul for drawing any such consequence from the narration of Moses, as that Melchisedek was an eternal priest, and a type of the Messiah, when he had the words of Psal. cx. 4. to insist on, as he is expressly doing in the epistle to the Hebrews? In these words the eternity of the priesthood of Melchisedek, and of Christ, is expressly declared: for if these words say he is after that order in any thing, it is in the eternity of the priesthood. The apostle therefore did not draw the eternity of Melchisedek, nor represent him as a type of the Messiah, from Jewish tradition, but shews it from the scripture. And Christians ought to be satisfied with the authority of the apostle, pointing out Melchisedek as the Son of God, appearing in human likeness, prefiguring his eternal priesthood, by saying, that Jesus, of whom it is witnessed in the gospel that he liveth, is the same person who received tithes of Abraham.

And indeed, according to the apostle's account, there is no room in the order of Melchisedek for any other priest, or intercessor with God by sacrifice, but the Son of God alone, who shewed himself to Abraham in the similitude, and who shews himself to us by the gospel in the reality of that similitude, in the truth of that likeness and figure. For, 1. Melchisedek abideth a priest continually; and, continuing ever, hath a priesthood that passeth not from one to another. 2. He intercedes continually by that sacrifice of himself, which he once offered, and never needeth to repeat. 3. His intercession by that sacrifice saveth to the uttermost; and

* This way of speaking might give occasion to a late spiteful reproacher of God's word to say, "Melchisedek —— a thousand idle guesses have been made, and "various fables invented, about him. St Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, shews "great cabbalistical skill on this subject: and grounds, on such forced allusions as "might pass in the school of Gamaliel, the least conclusive reasoning that ever "was heard out of it."

nothing

nothing can be done beyond that. 4. There is no room for any to interpose betwixt the Most High and him who is the Son of the Highest, nor betwixt him and them that come to God only by him, who are all members of his body, and are all in him, without distinction, a royal priesthood. 5. The influence of his priesthood extends to the whole possession of the Most High: and so there is no room in heaven or earth for any other. God's whole family, in heaven and earth, comes to God only by the priest of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.

The First Love left.

Rev. ii. 4.

Nevertheless, I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love.

IT hath been often observed, that the vision of the seven golden candlesticks contains a prophecy of the state of the Christian profession, in seven different periods, from the beginning of it unto Christ's second coming, even as the vision of the book sealed with seven seals. Thus the things blamed and commended in the epistles to these seven churches, must be typical of the things that were to happen in those seven successive periods; so that these seven epistles must have a mystical as well as a literal explication. And the conclusion of each epistle, "He that hath an ear let "him hear," used by the Lord, when he spake parables, calls upon us to attend to the mystical sense intended by the spirit of prophecy in what he saith to each of the churches.

In this epistle the Lord gives the Ephesian church what we may call a great Christian character. Their doctrine was sound; they professed the faith with knowledge, discernment, and zeal, against heretical pravity. They had tried false apostles, and found them liars.

They laboured in good works, without fainting or wearying in well-doing.

They suffered patiently for Christ's name, enduring all the afflictions to which the profession of his name exposed them in the world.

Their

Their diſcipline alſo was pure, putting away the wicked. They could not bear them which are evil. They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

The Lord approves them in all this, and commends them for it, even as it is ſaid, he loved the young man who had kept the letter of the law, Mark x. 21.; while, notwithſtanding this fine character he gives them, he finds a fault with them, for which he threatens to unchurch them.

Thou haſt left thy firſt love. Their firſt love muſt be that which they had when they were firſt made alive with Chriſt from treſpaſſes and ſins, wherein they had been walking, and were dead; and ſo it is the ſame with her love, who loved much on the account of much being forgiven her. See Luke vii. 42. 43. 47. — "Which of them will love him moſt? " — he to whom he forgave moſt. —— Thou haſt rightly " judged. —— Her ſins, which are many, are forgiven; for " ſhe loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the ſame " loveth little."

This love was at firſt the ſpring of all thoſe good things which the Lord here commends, and which the Epheſians ſtill retained, when they had left the love from whence they at firſt flowed: ſo that their works were not now their firſt works; becauſe they were coming now from another principle. For they could not leave their firſt love, retaining the fruits of it, any otherwiſe than by making a merit of theſe, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs upon this ſame good Chriſtian character. They left their firſt love, by not continuing to look into the perfect law fulfilled by Chriſt, who made it the law of liberty, by redeeming from its curſe; ſo that they could not, by looking into that law, daily ſee themſelves ſinners, and needing the forgiveneſs that the Lord calls his diſciples daily to aſk, when he commands them to obſerve that law. If they maintained their Chriſtian character, therefore, they had no conviction of ſin, and ſo no ſenſe of forgiveneſs; and no more loved much, becauſe much was forgiven. Their firſt love to one another was for that ſame thing for which God regarded them, even the righteouſneſs of his beloved Son: for they loved one another as brethren, for whom Chriſt died. And this came of their love to God, for his love manifeſted in giving his Son to be the propitiation for their ſins. But now their love to one another went upon their good character, by which alſo they ſuppoſed they had the favour of God, ſeeing they had him to thank. They

were

were thereby not as other men, nor as they themſelves had once been. And their love to Jeſus Chriſt could not now, as at firſt, reſpect him as redeeming them to God by his blood, but as the author of the great change made upon them. And thus it was poſſible for the Epheſian church, notwithſtanding their excellent character, to cool in their love to Jeſus Chriſt, and his Father, and to one another for the truth's ſake; and ſo to apoſtatiſe from Chriſt, under a zealous profeſſion of his name, and provoke him to turn them out of that order wherein he had put them for walking together in love, even as he loved them, and gave himſelf a ſacrifice to God for them.

When we take this epiſtle to the Epheſian church in the myſtical view, we may perceive how all the primitive churches ſwerved at firſt from the power of Chriſtianity, having the form of it; which was the true cauſe of their falling out of that church-order, wherein the apoſtles ſet them, and which they connected with the ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith in Chriſt; and we may ſee what really came to paſs ſoon after the death of the apoſtles, with reſpect to the Chriſtian profeſſion, repreſented by the appearance that the Epheſian church makes in this epiſtle.

After the death of the apoſtles, they were plagued with falſe Scriptures, forged *goſpels*, *acts*, *epiſtles*, and *apocalypſes*; even as they had been with falſe apoſtles, while the apoſtles lived. But they rejected theſe forgeries, and held the apoſtolical ſcriptures, in oppoſition to them. And they contended earneſtly for the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and his Father, againſt all thoſe heretics, who, calling themſelves Chriſtians, in effect denied both him and his Father, as Ebion, Cerinthus, Saturninus, Baſilides, Valentinus, Cerdon, Marcion, *&c.*

They ſuffered unto death for the Chriſtian name. And their non-reſiſtance and intrepidity in ſuffering for that name, is atteſted by their enemies; as Pliny to Trajan, Arrian on Epictetus, Marcus Antoninus, Lucian, and Celſus.

The apologiſts for Chriſtianity in thoſe times inſiſt much on the purity and holineſs of the laws of Jeſus Chriſt, appealing confidently to the lives of the Chriſtian people as conformable to them. Nor could any have then been tolerated in the churches, openly neglecting any of his commandments, when their diſcipline was exerciſed agreeably to the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the Chriſtian law.

Notwithſtanding all this, and though their loving one

another as brethren, and labour of charity, was taken notice of by the Heathen *; yet their love appeared not to be the first love, loving much, because much was forgiven. For when any proposed to profess Christianity, they were not admitted to the Christian communion, or to baptism, immediately upon their gladly receiving the word of repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus, as in the days of the apostles; but they were kept in the state of catechumens, till they attained a habit of Christian practice, and gained a good character: and upon that they were received. This was far from being like the adding of those immediately to the church, who gladly received the word of repentance and remission in the name of Jesus, whom they had lately murdered. These had no good character for which they were to be regarded; and were considered by one another as self-condemned sinners, looking for forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, reconciling them to God in one body. And thus the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one soul, being united in the truth that they believed, concerning God well pleased in his beloved Son, delivered for the offences, and raised for the justification of sinners. But this first love was left, when their love to one another came to go upon the good character, which they behoved then to look on as the term of their acceptance with God; their regard to one another going upon that, for which they thought God regarded them.

When any of them fell from this character, they did not confirm love to the penitent, as the apostle bids the Corinthians do to the incestuous person, whom they had put away by his order; but kept them long under penance, that they might thereby make satisfaction for their sins; and in that state labour to recover their lost character, upon which they might at last confirm their love to them. This was done by fasting, and humbling, and mortifying themselves, to the observation of the church. And the practice that recommended them much, was almsgiving, wherein they soon began to place merit. But that which crowned all, and finished the Christian character, was martyrdom; of so great account as to draw veneration from them to the martyrs. So that men might now be inclined to suffer from a quite other principle than the love of the truth: for this came to be little minded, that the apostle said, "Though I bestow all "my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to

* Lucian de morte Peregrini.

"be

" be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

As the Lord threatens the Ephesian church with removing their candlestick, or turning them out of their church-order; so the consequence of thus leaving the first love in the churches, after the apostles, was their swerving from that order, 1. By what has been observed concerning their discipline. They cannot indeed be blamed for this, that " they " imposed the course of repentance never but once. And " whoever fell into his vitious transgressions the second " time, could never be reconciled to the church, and was " to expect his pardon from God alone:" because they had no precedent for a second absolution from excommunication in the scripture, which gives very plain direction as to the first. But their state of catechumens and of penitents, so opposite to the apostolic practice and direction, plainly shews them departing from the holy commandment of love to one another, as Christ loved them; and from the order wherein the apostles set Christians for obeying that command of love to one another, for the truth's sake. And truly, in the account that the apologists, and other writers of that time, give of Christianity, there is little or no notice taken of that truth, for the sake of which Christians at first loved one another. It will be hard to find it fairly set forth in any of their writings, except one passage in an epistle to one Diognetus; but many passages occur, that might move one to suspect their ignorance of it.

2. In place of fasting continually, in the instituted ordinances, on Christ their passover sacrificed for them, as before the first love was left; they now established to themselves an annual solemnity about the time of the Jewish passover. Thus they kept the feast! And this was their Christian passover!

3. As the Jews, going about to establish their own righteousness, as it were by the deeds of the law, did not satisfy themselves with the written law, but joined their traditions with it, and the exact observation of these, to make up their righteousness; even so, when Christians swerved from the truth, for which they originally loved one another, and began to establish their own righteousness on their Christian obedience, they were not satisfied with their written law, but took in tradition; which they carefully followed as to several religious usages and ceremonies, for which they saw no foundation in scripture*. This led them out of their

* Tertullian. de corona militis.

primitive order; and a difference in the tradition about the great day of their paſſover, created great diviſion among them.

4. While the firſt love remained, the word of the apoſtles, according to Chriſt's prayer, that all who believe on him through it, may be one, and his Spirit remaining among them, was ſufficient to keep them in order; for then they could be like-minded one to another, according to Chriſt Jeſus, glorifying his God and Father with one mind, in one mouth. And then they were capable of walking according to this rule given by the apoſtle Peter: "The elders" [preſbyters] "which are among you I exhort —— Feed the "flock of God, which is among you, overſeeing, not —— "as over-ruling the heritage, but being enſamples to the "flock. —— Likewiſe ye younger ſubmit yourſelves unto "the elders" [preſbyters];" "yea all, be ſubject one to "another, and be clothed with humility." But when the firſt love was left, they found it needful, for avoiding diviſion and confuſion, through the cooling of love, and for maintaining unity and order, to ſet up in every church one viſible head and centre of unity, in ſubjection to whom, the elders and brethren might live in unity and peace. To this head they appropriated the name *biſhop*, [overſeer], originally common to all elders, whom Peter exhorted to do the work of biſhops. And this uniting headſhip became a bone of contention for the pride and ambition of ſelf-ſeeking men; becauſe of the power and pre-eminence, far different from the pre-eminence of the elders among them that were younger, as to ſkilfulneſs in the word of righteouſneſs, by which they were all brethren. But every church, being now united in itſelf by this one viſible head, became again united with other churches, in its ſubjection to ſynods and councils of theſe biſhops; who alſo, for the ſake of unity and order, came to be ſubordinate to one another. And though this inſtrument of union was likewiſe, from its beginning, a notable mean of diviſion and contention; yet every church was one in its ſubjection to its one biſhop; and after that, all the churches became one catholic viſible church, by the ſynods and ſubordinations of theſe biſhops.

Beholding this, we ſee the candleſtick removed out of his place. The primitive church order is no more. And Jeſus Chriſt no more appears walking in the midſt of the golden candleſticks, and holding the ſtars in his right hand.

NOTES

NOTES on SCRIPTURE-TEXTS.

NUMBER VII.

JUDGMENT with MERCY; The divine JEALOUSY; GOD inviſible to MORTALS; ABRAHAM's SIGHT of CHRIST's DAY; CHRIST three NIGHTS in the HEART of the EARTH; The ERROR of the SADDUCEES; The SCRIBE near GOD's KINGDOM; The true GRACE of GOD.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1760.]

JUDGMENT with MERCY.

EXODUS xxxiv. 7.

Keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin, and holding guiltleſs will not hold guiltleſs; viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons, and upon the ſons of ſons, upon the thirds and upon the fourths.

THE Lord God, forgiving the iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin of thouſands, on whom he will have mercy, lets not any of their ſins go unpuniſhed: for, holding guiltleſs, he will not hold guiltleſs, or, "clearing will "not clear." This remarkable phraſe occurs again in the prophets: Jer. xxx. 11. and chap. xlvi. 28. "I will make a "full end of all nations whither I have driven thee; but I "will

" will not make a full end of thee, and I will chaſtiſe thee " in judgment, and clearing I will not clear thee;" and Nah. i. 3. " The Lord is ſlow to anger, and great of power, " and clearing will not clear;" or holding guiltleſs, will not hold guiltleſs. How ſinners are held guiltleſs, and yet not held guiltleſs; ſin forgiven, and yet puniſhed! cannot be underſtood, nor any way reconciled, without the inſinuation that is made in the words immediately following. Our tranſlators would reconcile it, in Jeremiah, by ſoftening the expreſſion thus, " I will not leave thee altogether" or " wholly unpuniſhed." For they could not give it ſo ſtrong, where it applies evidently to the objects of mercy and grace, as in Exodus and Nahum, where they might ſuppoſe it poſſible to apply it to others. But the expreſſion, " will not clear," or " will not hold guiltleſs," is the very ſame that we have in the third commandment, " The Lord " will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain." Now, this cannot be reconciled with holding guiltleſs, as the forementioned forgiveneſs, without admitting the great intent of the following words, *viz.*

Viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons, &c. This is the more remarkable, that it was written with the finger of God upon the tables of the covenant, Exod. xx. 5. Deut. v. 9. And it ſtands here as a part of the name or character of the God of Iſrael, diſtinguiſhing him from all idols and falſe gods; and this is that ſame name of God which his people called upon in their greateſt diſtreſſes, and in their moſt ſolemn and earneſt prayers to him, particularly for the forgiveneſs of their ſins; as Pſal. xxv. 11. " For thy " name's ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity: for it is " great." We ſee how Moſes prays here upon hearing the name proclaimed, verſ. 9. " Let my Lord, I pray thee, go " amongſt us, (for it is a ſtiffnecked people), and pardon " our iniquity and our ſin, and take us for thine inheri- " tance." On another great occaſion (Numb. xiv. 17. 18. 19.) he calls on this name expreſsly thus,—" I beſeech thee, " let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou " haſt ſpoken, ſaying, Jehovah long-ſuffering, and of great " mercy, forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion, and clearing " will not clear, viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon " the ſons, upon the thirds and upon the fourths. Pardon, " I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, according to " the greatneſs of thy mercy." And Jeremiah, in his prayer (chap. xxxii. 17. 18.), addreſſes God in theſe words, " Ah,

" Ah, Lord Jehovah, behold, thou haſt made the heaven " and the earth, by thy great power and ſtretched-out arm, " there is nothing too hard for thee, doing mercy to thou- " ſands, and recompenſing the iniquity of the fathers in- " to the boſom of their ſons after them."

The Lord appropriated this to himſelf, as his divine prerogative, to viſit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children: for he alone could ſay, " Behold, all ſouls are mine, " as the ſoul of the father, ſo alſo the ſoul of the ſon is " mine," Ezek. xviii. 4. And therefore he diſcharged the judges and rulers of Iſrael, to put the children to death for their fathers ſins, Deut. xxiv. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 5. 6.

God's way of viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, was ſo obſervable in the courſe of his peculiar providence about Iſrael, eſpecially at the captivity, that it became a proverb, " The fathers have eaten ſour grapes, " and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge," Ezek. xviii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 29. The iniquity of Manaſſeh was viſited on Joſiah's children, and grandchild, if not on Joſiah himſelf, as well as his father, Amon, 2 Kings xxiii. 29. 30. and chap. xxi. verſ. 23. Manaſſeh's ſins were puniſhed in the captivity, 2 Kings xxiii. 26. and xxiv. 3. 4.

It appears from Ezek. chap. xviii. that the Jews were not ſatisfied with this way of their God. They thought it unequal, as it was ſupernatural; and they expreſſed this in their proverb: yet it was too manifeſt to be denied, that the God who ſpake to that nation on Sinai, who declared his name to Moſes, and who ſhewed himſelf, by many infallible proofs, to be the creator of heaven and earth, in oppoſition to all falſe gods, had, in the moſt ſolemn manner, declared this to be his way. They could not reaſonably reject a revelation that was laid in the very conſtitution of their nation, and of which they had ſo many proofs before their eyes, in the whole conduct of Providence about them, as they poſſeſſed the land of Canaan, and even in the captivity itſelf. And, in that revelation, their God gave this as a part of his character, that he viſits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, as plainly as he demonſtrated himſelf to them to be the only true God. If this, that they judged ſo very unequal, had moved them to abandon the revelation, and take their notions of the Deity only from what they beheld in nature, and the courſe of the world of mankind, they behoved ſtill to ſee children inheriting from their parents the diſmal effects of their faults, and

theſe

these natural necessary punishments coming to them from their parents, antecedently to any fault of their own; and they could not but observe those who are reduced to misery by their own fault, relieved at the expense and loss of others: so that they behoved, after giving up with revelation, to vindicate Providence upon the point of one's suffering for the fault of another, if they did not utterly deny a providence.

Nor would they have come better off by turning to the Egyptian gods; as this story tells. Mycerinus, son of Cheops, king of Egypt, was told by an oracle, that his reign would continue but seven years: and as he complained of this to the gods, in inquiring the reason, why so long and prosperous a reign had been undulged to his father and uncle, who were equally cruel and impious, whilst his own, which he had endeavoured so carefully to render as equitable and mild, as it was possible for him to do, should be short and unhappy; he was answered, that these were the very causes of it, it being the will of the gods to oppress Egypt, during the space of 150 years, to punish its crimes; and that his reign, which was appointed, like those of the preceding monarchs, to be of 50 years continuance, was shortened on account of his too great lenity. Even amongst the philosophers, Plutarch, speaking of the gods slowness to punish, vindicates the divine justice upon the supposition of the fact, That the sins of forefathers are imputed to their offspring.

The Lord condescends to answer their complaint, by asserting his indisputable right to do as he did, in visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children: "Behold, all "souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul "of the son is mine." But then he shews his displeasure at the users of that proverb, whereby they reproached and ridiculed this his way as unequal, by swearing, that they should not have any more use for it; but, saith he, "the "soul that sinneth, it shall die." Seeing they who accounted this unequal, that one should die for another's sin, behoved to hold it equal, that every man should die by his own sin, or live by his own righteousness; he lets these complainers know, that they should be dealt with according to this natural way, that they judged equal, in opposition to his supernatural way; while, at the same time, he appeals to themselves, if their ways were not unequal: "Are "not your ways unequal?" But seeing the complaint they made

made in using the proverb, imported, that, however their fathers had sinned, they themselves might have some merit to plead for life, or, if they were guilty, they supposed they might repent, and so live by their own righteousness; the Lord therefore gives it them in their own way, to make of it what they can, even as he says in the gospel, "This do, "and thou shalt live;" and, "If thou wilt enter into life, "keep the commandments:" For, "If there had been a "law given which could have given life, verily righteous- "ness should have been by the law;" so he says here, "Re- "pent, and turn from all your transgressions, so iniquity "shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your "transgressions, whereby you have transgressed, and make "you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will ye die, "O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death "of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn, "and live ye." This is a hard task set to them, who accounted the Lord's way, of judgment with mercy, unequal. Here is no promise of a new heart and spirit, for repenting and turning from transgression, as there is to all them whose transgressions he forgives, clearing and not clearing, by visiting iniquity in his own way, to whom he gives repentance, with the remission of their sins. How then could they expect to live, and escape death, by a rule which they could never come up to? Or how could they who despised and rejected the Lord's way, expect help from him in that way of their own? The despisers of the judgment that is with mercy, must have judgment without mercy; and so die in their own sins. The bulk of mankind, conscious that their ways are unequal, though they cannot be fully persuaded out of the vain imagination and fond conceit of their own merit, could never, by all philosophy, be persuaded to rely wholly and entirely on that merit, but behoved always to have, and must still have something like an atonement, or some sort of mediation, to depend on in their approaches to the Deity for acceptance, and in their hopes of good from him.

Some, who, it seems, are of the same opinion with the Jews, as to the inequality of this way of the Lord with them, would reconcile his visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, with his forbidding the judges of Israel to do so, by this, that he did it only in the case of the childrens following their parents, in the practice of those iniquities that were thus punished. But this would carry it further

than the fourth generation: for why are not the iniquities of the fathers visited on the fifth, or any after generation following them in those iniquities, as well as on the fourth, if this be the reason for it? And why then goes it no further than the fourth in the law, and in the proclamation of God's name? To this they answer, That the reason why it goes no further than the fourth, is, because, being the punishment of the sins to which the parents led them, it extends to no more generations than they might be supposed to live and see, and be afflicted with the consequences of their iniquities. But this will not hold with respect to the most notable instance of visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children that we have in the Old Testament, which is the captivity lamented by Jeremiah, in these words, Lam. v. 7. "Our fathers have sinned, and" are "not, and "we have borne their iniquities." Why were the sins of Manasseh visited on his posterity, when he was not alive to see it, and when the third or fourth generation was the same thing to him with the tenth or twentieth? If his posterity suffered only for doing the iniquity that he did before them, then they bare only their own sins; they suffered not the punishment of his, but of their own imitation of them; and so there had been no manner of occasion for the proverb that the wicked Jews used by way of reproach and ridicule, nor for the serious lamentation of Jeremiah.

They who would thus vindicate the Lord, upon the supposition of the inequality of his visiting the iniquity of one upon another, must find much difficulty in explaining the name of God, as it was proclaimed to Moses. And how shall they judge it equal, that by Adam's offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation? Rom. v. 12. 21. Or how shall they think God's way equal, in "reconciling the "world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" when "he made him sin for us who knew no sin," 2 Cor. v. 19. 21. and "laid on him the inquities of us all," Is. liii. 6.; "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the "tree," and "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," 1 Pet. ii. 24. and iii. 18.; and who "hath redeemed us "from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13.? If we account this unequal, what account do we make of revelation? or what is the use of it?

This peculiar way that the Lord took in the land of Israel, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the

third

third and fourth generation, ſerved unto that people as a ſign and emblem of their being condemned to death by their father Adam's ſin, but eſpecially of the Lord's laying their iniquities on Chriſt the promiſed ſeed, whereby they were to be ſaved from death, without letting their ſins go unpuniſhed. And this explains the name of God, and makes him appear merciful and juſt, "a juſt God and a Saviour," to them who do not hold it unequal in the Sovereign Lord, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things, to puniſh the ſin of one upon another, with whom he hath connected him for that ſame purpoſe.

When Chriſt died for the redemption of tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt covenant, and the name of God was manifeſted, through his death, by the goſpel, unto all nations, then there was no more uſe for this way of viſiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, than there was for the ſacrifices, which the Lord ſaid he would ſet aſide when the new covenant ſhould be eſtabliſhed on the true ſacrifice, Jer. xxxi. 34. Heb. x. 16. 17. 18. And therefore the Lord ſaid, the time would come when there ſhould be no more uſe for that proverb: for when all the ſins of the thouſands that ſhall be pardoned, were viſited on the promiſed ſeed, there ſhould be no more transferring of guilt and puniſhment from one to another, Jer. xxxi. 29. 30. So this was ſet aſide, together with the ſacrifices, when the great end of it was reached.

The Divine Jealousy.

Exod. xx. 5. 6. with Deut. v. 9. 10.

—— *For I Jehovah, thy God,* am a *jealous God, viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons, upon the thirds and upon the fourths, to them that hate me, and doing mercy to thouſands, to them that love me, and to them that keep my commandments.*

For. This makes the following words to give the reaſon why God forbade worſhipping any image of our deviſing or making. And, if they be well conſidered, they may be found pointing to the glorious repreſentation of God that is made in *Jeſus Chriſt*, the perfect "image of the inviſible "God;" for the ſake of which he diſcharges the worſhip-

ping of any other image, wherein his glory is changed and made leſs, as it loſes in the repreſentation.

Thy God. His peculiar relation to that people was through their connection with Chriſt, that ſeed promiſed to Abraham their father, and through the fleſhly relation to that ſeed. Thus he tells them, (Deut. vii. 6. 7. 8.), that they were a ſpecial people unto himſelf, and that he ſet his love on them, and chuſed them; becauſe he would keep the oath which he had ſworn to their fathers: and ſo the temporal election of Iſrael according to the fleſh, was a fit type of the eternal election of the Iſrael according to the ſpirit, who were choſen in Chriſt to be a truly holy and peculiar people, and to be bleſſed in him with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places. Iſrael after the fleſh could not underſtand the reaſon and ground of their peculiar relation to God, who brought them from Egypt, without underſtanding the promiſe of that ſeed, Chriſt, which was made to their fathers, and which the Lord frequently put them in mind of, as the reaſon of his not utterly rejecting them when they deſerved it.

A jealous God. This title is uſed eſpecially with reſpect to idolatry; and it is expreſsly called his name, Exod. xxxiv. 14 "For thou ſhalt worſhip no other god: for Jehovah, "whoſe name is JEALOUS, is a jealous God." And indeed it imports the whole name that was proclaimed to Moſes, verſ. 6. and 7. For the Lord ſets forth the relation betwixt himſelf and the nation of Iſrael under the notion of that betwixt a huſband and his wife, and this notion of jealouſy is taken from thence; even as their turning to any other gods, is repreſented by a wife provoking her huſband to jealouſy, by turning aſide from him to another. Now, jealouſy neceſſarily ſuppoſes love, and is inſeparable from it, where the leaſt eſtrangement and unfaithfulneſs appears in the other party that is obliged to love. In this caſe, love works in the way of jealouſy. As the goſpel declares, and plainly manifeſts God to be love; ſo the Lord proclaimed the ſame thing to Moſes, on occaſion of Iſrael's provoking him to jealouſy with the calf, and ſhewed him his love working in the way of grace, of long-ſuffering, of abundant goodneſs and faithfulneſs, and of mercy, pardoning mercy for thouſands of ſinners; not every ſinner, but thoſe of all ſorts whom he chuſed in the ſovereignty of his grace; as he ſaid juſt before, (chap. xxxiii. 19.), "I will make all "my goodneſs paſs before thee, and I will proclaim the "name

" name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to " whom I will be gracious, and will ſhew mercy on whom I " will ſhew mercy." When the divine love appears in this manner, towards ſinners, or the tranſgreſſors of his law, that obliged them to love; the neceſſary oppoſition of his love to their ſin behoved to appear at the ſame time: for, as much as God is love, ſo much muſt he be oppoſite to the contrary alienation and enmity that ſhews itſelf in the tranſgreſſion of his law that obliges to love. And when his love ſhews itſelf toward tranſgreſſors, its oppoſition to their ſin muſt be manifeſt. Now, this is the divine jealouſy: and it is expreſſed in the proclamation of his name, or of his love, in this manner, " Holding guiltleſs will not hold guiltleſs, viſiting the " iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons."

With reſpect to this jealouſy, or love, ſhewing itſelf in its infinite oppoſition to the malignity of ſin, God is deſcribed by the emblem of a conſuming fire, Deut. iv. 24. —— " For Jehovah thy God is a conſuming fire, a jealous God." And ſee Nahum, chap. i. verſ. 2. 3. " Jehovah is a jealous " God, and a revenger, a revenger Jehovah, and a huſ- " band of burning wrath; Jehovah revengeth his adver- " ſaries, and he reſerveth to his haters; Jehovah is ſlow " to anger, and great in power, and holding guiltleſs will " not hold guiltleſs." Agreeably to this, the goſpel, that calls God *love*, calls him likewiſe a conſuming fire, Heb. x. 29. " Our God is a conſuming fire." The ſame thing may be obſerved in that which the goſpel gives us, as the evidence by which we are to believe that God is love, 1 John iv. 8. 9. 10. " He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for " God is love. In this was manifeſted the love of God to- " wards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son in- " to the world, that we might live through him. Herein " is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and " ſent his Son the propitiation for our ſins." The propitiation for our ſins ſhews the jealouſy of his love; and we have it expreſſed by the apoſtle in this manner, (Rom. iii. 24. 25. 26.), " Being freely juſtified in his grace, by the re- " demption that is in Chriſt Jeſus, whom God ſet forth before, " a propitiation, by the faith in his blood, unto the mani- " feſtation of his juſtice, for the paſſing over of the ſins " that were before, in the forbearance of God, toward the " manifeſtation of his juſtice in the time that is now; that " he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him who is of the " faith of Jeſus." As this was ſet forth before, in the Old Teſtament,

Teſtament, while God was forbearing to execute the curſe of his law, by the typical mercy-ſeat, ſprinkled with the blood of the ſacrifices; ſo this is the thing that was intended by viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons. In this the glory of divine love is fully diſplayed; and here the divine jealouſy burns hotteſt, and flames moſt vehemently: for, in the death of the Son of God, "the wrath of God is re-"vealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrigh-"teouſneſs." So "our God is a conſuming fire."

Thus the Son of God, given to be the propitation, is the only proper image of God: for, in him, the divine glory loſes nothing in the manifeſtation of it, but appears in its brightneſs, by the truly divine and infinite dignity of the perſon in whom it is repreſented. There can be no hazard of idolatry in paying divine worſhip to this image of God, who is the brightneſs of the divine glory, as all who believe him to be the Son of God will readily acknowledge, worſhipping the Lamb that was ſlain, as their Lord and their God. Now, this is that, for the ſake of which God forbade the repreſenting of him to ourſelves by any image, or worſhipping of him by any ſuch means. Forbidding that, he has, by this, made ſufficient proviſion for our neceſſity, and want of a ſuitable repreſentation of him to us ſinners, and of ſomething to fix our minds upon in worſhipping him. No wonder then if his jealouſy be moſt fervent againſt all neglect or contempt ſhewed towards this brightneſs of his glory, eſpecially in pretending to approach him, by repreſenting him to ourſelves in any other way: for in this we ſhew the greateſt hatred to him.

It may be perceived, by the very firſt hint the ſcripture gives of God's love to ſinners of mankind, (Gen. iii. 15.), that this love was to appear amongſt them, as it were, jealous againſt all ſin. And if this was infinitely expreſſed in the Lord's death, with reſpect to their ſins who obtain mercy through him, it muſt be likewiſe ſhewed, and made known with reſpect to the ſins of all others, but eſpecially of thoſe who ſhew diſaffection to that glorious manifeſtation of his love. When the riches of the divine glory ſhall be made known on the veſſels of mercy, this will be accompanied with ſhewing his wrath, and making his power known on the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction: for when the Lord Jeſus ſhall come to be glorified in his ſaints, and admired in all them that believe, he ſhall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God;

and

and that obey not the goſpel, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction. This was prefigured, or foreſhewed, in the deſtruction of the old world, when Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, was ſaved with his family in the ark; and in the deſtruction of Sodom, from which the Lord's mercy ſaved Lot; and in the plagues and overthrow of the Egyptians, and deſtruction of the Canaanites, when the Lord gave Iſrael poſſeſſion of the promiſed land; and likewiſe in the fearful deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and diſperſion of the Jewiſh nation, when the divine love and mercy was manifeſted to the nations by the goſpel. Thus we ſee, this that is ſet forth under the notion of jealouſy, ever did, and ever will accompany the manifeſtation of divine love among ſinners, which muſt appear, as it really is, infinitely oppoſite to ſin.

This is an account of the divine goodneſs, quite oppoſite to that which the devil inſinuated to our firſt parents, when he became an interpreter of God's words to them, in the firſt temptation: "Ye ſhall not ſurely die," ſaid he; and this is generally believed to this day in the world. They copy after him as an interpreter of God's words, who go about to take away the neceſſity, yea, the very being of the propitiation, (which is the true manifeſtation of divine love), by the account they would make to us of that great ſaying of the goſpel, "God is love." If their account of this (which ſets aſide, one way or other, the puniſhment of ſin, and the great atonement) be more agreeable, and leſs harſh to us, than the plain ſcripture-account of it, it is becauſe we love ſin, and hate the infinitely good God, who is infinitely oppoſite to it.

To them that hate me. Idolatry (or repreſenting God to themſelves by any thing in the viſible creation, to be thereby worſhipped) was the grand evidence of this *hatred*, againſt which the divine jealouſy ſhewed itſelf in the nation of Iſrael, viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the ſons. But all ſin is reſolvable into idolatry, in the apoſtle's ſenſe of it, when he calls covetouſneſs idolatry; as the Lord alſo makes it the ſerving or worſhipping of another god, which he calls *Mammon*. By the oppoſition here ſtated, betwixt love to God and hatred to him, we ſee, that as the keeping of his commandments is loving him, ſo the not keeping of them is hating him. This is agreeable to what is ſaid by the apoſtle, Rom. viii. 6. 7. "To be carnally minded, is death; "—becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it

"is

" is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Now, as, in the nation of Israel, God visited the iniquity of the fathers (who were his haters by idolatry) upon the sons; so likewise, when we look at the great thing pointed out to us by that visiting of iniquity, we find the apostle speaking of it in this manner, (Rom. v. 10.) " When we were ene-" mies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." And (Colos. i. 21. 22.) " You that were sometime aliena-" ted, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet " now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through " death, to present you holy," &c.

And doing mercy to thousands. By that which was intended in the visiting of the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, thousands obtain mercy who had been his haters, and their iniquity, transgression, and sin is forgiven: for, if any kept his commandments, and so did not hate him, they needed no mercy.

To them that love me. This is the effect of their obtaining mercy through the visiting of their iniquities upon Christ; and this is the character of them to whom God thus doth mercy: Luke vii. 42. 43. 47. " Which of them will love " him most? — He to whom he forgave most. — Her sins, " which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but " to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." 1 Tim. i. 13. 14. " I obtained mercy. — And the grace of our Lord " was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in " Christ Jesus." 1 John iv. 10. 12. " Herein is love, not " that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son " the propitiation for our sins. — We love him, because he " first loved us."

And to them that keep my commandments. This is the great proof and evidence of our love to God, as the apostle tells us, 1 John v. 3. " For this is the love of God, that we " keep his commandments." Of this keeping his commandments we may see chap. iii. 22. 23. " We keep his com-" mandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his " sight. And this is his commandment, that we should be-" lieve on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one " another, as he gave us commandment: and he that keep-" eth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him." See likewise chap. ii. 3. 9. 10. For this brotherly love is in the New-testament church, as zeal against idolatry was in the Old.

God

God invisible to Mortals.

Exod. xxxiii. 18. 20.

And he (Moses) *said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. — And he* (Jehovah) *said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live.*

THE Lord spake to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend; promised, in answer to his request, that his presence (or face) should go with him, and that he would give him rest; and told him, he had found grace in his sight, and that he knew him by name. Moses, by all this, is encouraged yet to ask further, that he would make him see his glory.

This must be more than what he was already in possession of, or was now enjoying, as he beheld the similitude of the Lord, and was made sensible of the favour wherein he stood with him, which is called making his face to shine, or lifting up the light of his countenance. It cannot be thought, that Moses was seeking to comprehend the infinite Being in his finite mind: nor can it be imagined, that he was turning aside to seek after some metaphysical notion of the divine essence. But by the Lord's answer to him, granting his petition so far as he was able to bear, and refusing it in that respect wherein it would prove hurtful and destructive to him, we may perceive, that he wanted these two things.

1. He wanted to behold him in that light wherein he dwells, which the apostle says, no man can approach unto. He desired to look upon the glory of the divine Majesty as it appears upon the throne in heaven, which the apostle calls "the Majesty on high," (Heb. i. 3.), telling the Hebrews, (chap. viii. 1.), "We have such an high priest who "is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in "the heavens." There was a faint beam of this shining in the cloud on the mercy-seat, between the cherubims, and making the face of Moses shine when he had seen it. He saw the Son of God appearing as a man, in a glory that he was capable to behold; even as the disciples beheld Jesus in the glory of his transfiguration, with Moses and Elias, appearing in glory, conversing with him. But if he desired to see him in his glory, as he now sits on the right hand of

the Majesty on high, this is what eyes of flesh cannot bear: for we see a ray of that glory made Paul fall to the ground, and blinded him so that he "could not see for the glory of "that light:" therefore the Lord, when he condescended to pass by Moses in that glory, would let him see no more of it than he could with safety look upon, as it were the back parts, in comparison with the brightness of his face: for when that glory was coming near to him, and was in passing by him, the Lord covered and protected him from being destroyed by its presence; but when it had passed, and was going away from him, he was admitted to look after it, as it began to disappear, and was vanishing out of sight, vers. 21. 22. 23. "And the Lord said, Behold, a place by "me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come "to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a "clift of the rock; and will cover thee with my hand while "I pass by. And I will take away mine hand, and thou "shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." This is a sight that flesh and blood can no more endure, than it can inherit the kingdom of God. No mortal ever hath seen, or can see what is here said shall not be seen. No saint, while in this tabernacle, walking by faith, not by sight, can approach unto that heavenly light wherein God dwells. They cannot be in the presence of the Lord Jesus, beholding him set down with the Father on his throne; but must be absent from him till this tabernacle be dissolved, and they clothed upon with their heavenly house, and mortality be swallowed up of life. When he comes again in the glory of his Father, and changes our bodies, fashioning them like his glorious body, we shall then see him as he is, and face to face, with the eyes of this body; but this cannot be, without destruction, till this body be changed.

2. It appears from the other part of the Lord's answer to this petition of Moses, that he wanted the Lord should also appear to his mind and understanding, in the bright excellence of his divine distinguishing character, or in the glory of his name, which the Lord seems here to call his face. The Lord said, in answer to his request, that he might be made to see his glory: "I will make all my goodness pass "before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah "before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gra-"cious, and will have compassion on whom I will have com-"passion. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for "there

" there shall no man see me and live." It is said in the gospel, (John i. 18.), " No man hath seen God at any time: " the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Fa- " ther, he hath declared." It was he that proclaimed the divine name to Moses more darkly, according to the dispensation he was under; and he hath declared it far more manifestly in his gospel to us; who can, in no other way, know that name, or behold the glory of it, but only in believing his report of it. The Lord condescended to grant the petition of Moses so far as to proclaim his name to him, and let him hear the report of it; but to set the brightness of the glory of the divine distinguishing character immediately before his understanding, to be directly viewed by him, this is what neither he, nor any son of Adam, could bear: for, saith he, " no man can see me and live." When Moses heard the report of the name, he " made haste, and bow- " ed his head towards the earth, and worshipped," (chap. xxxiv. 8.); and he called it to the children of Israel, the " glorious and fearful name," (Deut. xxviii. 5.), and made this account of it to them from the report he heard of it, (Deut. iv. 24.), " Jehovah, thy God, he is a consuming fire, " a jealous God." How then could he look upon the brightest display of that glory, and see the divine jealousy burning before him as a consuming fire, and live? And, especially, how could a sinner endure, then, to behold the offended Majesty of divine justice, not yet satisfied? Even Jesus, standing for sinners, to answer for their sins, to that justice, was killed by this sight of the divine jealousy; even he could not see this and live; who, having satisfied that justice, now beholds his Father's face in righteousness, and is made exceeding glad with his countenance. And now it is life and happiness to behold the glory of satisfied justice shining in his face, by the faith of the gospel reporting it: and this is the utmost we are capable of in this mortal life. But when we come to see what we now believe, to see him " face to face," and " know as we are known;" then shall we see God, and be perfectly and for ever happy in that sight, according to his promise, (Matth. v. 8.), " Bless- " ed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

Now, though Moses asked what could not be obtained by him in his present state, yet he desired nothing but what shall be obtained by all God's people in the world to come; even the same thing that all who are justified by faith, rejoice in the hope of: for they (Rom. v. 1. 2.) " rejoice

" in hope of the glory of God;" the ſame that Moſes deſired to ſee, when he found grace in his ſight. His requeſt was far from being diſagreeable to God, who granted it, as far as it was ſafe for him in his preſent condition and mortal ſtate. And this ſame deſire is ſo ſtrong in them that have the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, that they are well pleaſed rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord, to ſee what they now believe. Thus Paul deſired to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which he judged far better. And in the ſtate of the reſurrection, when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality; becauſe fleſh and blood cannot inherit that heavenly and eternal kingdom; this is what is given them in expectation, (Rev. xxii. 3. 4. 5.), " There ſhall be no more curſe; but " the throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it; and " his ſervants ſhall ſerve him, and they ſhall" ſee his face, " and his name in their foreheads. And there ſhall be no " night there; and they need no candle, neither light of " the ſun: for the Lord God giveth them light; and they " ſhall reign for ever and ever."

Abraham's Sight of CHRIST's Day.

GEN. xxii. 14.

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is ſaid to *this day, In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.*

Ar. Mont. *And Abraham called the name of that place, Jehovah will ſee; which is ſaid to-day, In the mount the Lord ſhall be ſeen.*

LXX. *And Abraham called the name of that place, The Lord hath ſeen, that they might ſay, to-day, In the mount the Lord was ſeen.*

THE command to ſacrifice Iſaac was a great trial of Abraham's faith, as may be perceived by the account of his obedience to it, Heb. xi. 17. 18. " He that had received " the promiſes, offered up his only begotten, of whom it " was ſaid, That in Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called." This command, which he obeyed, was not only extremely croſs to his great affection for his only Iſaac, whom he loved; but it alſo appeared quite inconſiſtent with the promiſes which he had received, even the promiſe to make his ſeed

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a nation to inherit Canaan's land, and the grand promiſe of that ſeed in whom all nations ſhould be bleſſed: for as to both theſe promiſes, concerning his ſeed, it was ſaid, by him that promiſed, "In Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called." Now, if this Iſaac died childleſs, according to the command to ſacrifice him, how ſhould the promiſes, of ſeed to Abraham through him, be performed? His faith had ſurmounted the great difficulty of "his own body now dead," and "the deadneſs of Sarah's womb:" but here a command comes, from him that made the promiſes, in the moſt glaring oppoſition and contrariety to theſe promiſes. He had the ſame authority and evidence for obeying this command, that he had for believing the promiſes; ſo that, if he refuſed the command, he rejected the promiſes; yea, if he doubted the command, he ſtaggered at the promiſes through unbelief. Thus was his faith tried! And ſo is our faith of the goſpel tried by the commands of the goſpel.

His faith, when he was tried, appeared manifeſtly in his anſwer to his ſon's queſtion, (verſ. 7.), that carried in it the whole force of the temptation for the trial of his faith. He ſaid, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb "for a burnt-offering?" He ſaw things prepared for ſacrificing, but nothing to be ſacrificed. He knew not that he was carrying the wood prepared for burning him, and his father the fire to kindle it, with the knife to ſlay him; and ſo he inquired at his father for the ſacrifice. This ſerved to move his bowels toward his dear ſon, in the moſt tender manner, and to rouſe up all his great affection for him to exert its utmoſt ſtrength: and not only ſo, but his ſon's queſtion behoved to turn, in his mind, to this: Where is the promiſed ſeed, that great ſacrifice, who, by redeeming from the curſe, is to bleſs all nations? For Abraham could not ſee how that ſeed ſhould come, if Iſaac were ſlain: ſo that ſacrificing him, was like ſacrificing all his hopes in this world, and in the world to come. Here was enough, in all reaſon, to ſtop the progreſs of his obedience to the command, though he had already proceeded in it two days. But, even in this ſituation of his mind, when he was at his wit's end, and could ſee no further about the ſacrifice, his faith prevailed againſt the temptation, and was profeſſed by him, in anſwer to his ſon's queſtion, in theſe words, (verſ. 8.), "My ſon, God will ſee to himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offer-"ing." In this faith he proceeded to offer Iſaac his ſon upon the altar. Thus we ſee "how faith wrought with his "works."

" works." He offered up his ſon by faith, (Heb. xi. 19.), " accounting that God was able to raiſe him up even from " the dead:" for his faith in the promiſe of that ſeed, the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the world, did, from the firſt, overthrow every objection that could be raiſed againſt it, by reſpecting God as raiſing the dead, Rom. iv. 17.; his faith was " anſwerable to him whom he " believed, God, making the dead alive, and calling no be- " ings as beings."

When he had obeyed, and received Iſaac as from the dead, he gave the place a name anſwerable to the profeſſion of his faith there verified. He had ſaid, " God will ſee;" and he called the name of the place, *Jehovah will ſee*, or *ſeeth*; or, according to the Greek verſion, *The Lord ſaw*. This is the paſſage to which our Lord refers, John viii. 56. where he ſays, " Your father Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day; and " he ſaw, and was glad:" for here it was that he ſaw what he believed, in a lively repreſentation of it: and ſo his " faith was made perfect" in the ſight of its object, as well as in the confirmation of it, by the divine oath, James ii. 21. 22. As *faith* had *wrought with his works*, when he was offering Iſaac his ſon; ſo, when he had offered him, " by works was " faith perfected," in the ſight of that which he believed, clearly ſet before him by means of his works. For, 1. When he had offered Iſaac his ſon on the altar, he ſaw, by his giving him up to death as a ſacrifice, God not ſparing his own Son, but delivering him up to death for our offences; he ſaw the Father giving his only begotten Son the propitiation for our ſins. 2. Through the ſalvation of Iſaac from death, by the ram caught in the thicket, which he took, and offered up in his ſtead, he ſaw our ſalvation by the ſubſtitution of Chriſt the Son of God, to die for us, as the ſacrifice of God's providing. He beheld " the Lamb of God taking a- " way the ſin of the world," which was the great thing exhibited in all the ſacrifices. Thus he beheld God ſeeing to himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offering, even as he believed; and ſo he called the place where he ſaw this, *Jehovah-jireh*; and this is what Moſes ſays is ſtill to be ſeen in the mount of the Lord. 3. He ſaw Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead, in the figure of his receiving Iſaac from the death to which he had given him up. This was on the third day from his ſetting out to offer him as a burnt-offering, verſ. 3. 4. And this anſwers to Chriſt's riſing the third day from his crucifixion: for the apoſtle ſays, (1 Cor. xv.), " That he roſe a- " gain

" gain the third day according to the ſcriptures;" and the ſcriptures, ſpeaking of the third day, with any reſpect to the reſurrection, are no other than Hoſ. vi. 2. and verſ. 4. of this ſame chapter. Chriſt's day that Abraham ſaw, was the time of his being delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification; and particularly, the day of his reſurrection is called " the Lord's day," Rev. i. 10. The apoſtle (Heb. iv. 4. to 10.) makes David's ſaying, " To-day" (Pſal. xcv. 7.), to be limiting a certain day, another than the ſeventh day, as a ſabbatiſm to God's people; that ſame day on which the Son of God entered into his reſt, having ceaſed from his own works, as God from his works on the ſeventh day. Abraham ſaw this day of the Lord's nativity, as the firſt-born of the dead, when he ſaw his reſurrection in the figure of his receiving Iſaac as from death, on the third day from his going to ſacrifice him: and this ſight anſwered to his faith that wrought with his works, accounting that God was able to raiſe him from the dead: for he beheld God raiſing the dead in a figure, as it is ſaid, (Heb. xi. 19.), " Accounting that God was able to raiſe up even from " the dead; from whence alſo he received him in a figure." When he ſaw this, he beheld God ſeeing to himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offering; ſo, according to the Greek verſion, " In the mount God was ſeen."

Moſes writes of it as a common ſaying, that what Abraham ſaw in the mount that he called *Jehovah-jireh*, was ſtill to be ſeen. And indeed he ſaw it in the mount Sinai, where he was with God: for the apoſtle, (Heb. viii. 5.), ſpeaking of the high prieſts, of Aaron's order, bringing their offerings into the holieſt of all on earth, ſays, " Which ſerve unto " the example and ſhadow of heavenly things, as Moſes " was admoniſhed of God when he was about to make the " tabernacle: for ſee (ſaith he) thou make all things ac- " cording to the pattern ſhewed to thee in the mount." And chap. ix. 22. 23. 24. " And almoſt all things are by the " law purged with blood; and without ſhedding of blood is " no remiſſion: it was therefore neceſſary that the patterns of " things in the heavens ſhould be purified with theſe, but " the heavenly things themſelves with better ſacrifices than " theſe: for Chriſt is not entered into the holy places " made with hands, the figures of the true, but into heaven " itſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us." Becauſe the Lord commanded Abraham to go into the land of Moriah, and offer his ſon upon one of the mountains there,

there, it is supposed that the mount Moriah, on which Solomon built the temple, (2 Chron. iii. 1.), is the very same with this that is here called *Jehovah-jireh*. And some have thought, that the name *Moriah* is of like interpretation, signifying, *The sight of Jah*. But however that be, we may observe, from what has been just now noted, that the same thing, seen by Abraham on this mount, and by Moses on the Mount Sinai, was represented and to be seen in the sanctuary on Mount Moriah. And now that we are come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, where we have access by faith, "the evidence of things not seen," the great thing to be seen there, is the Lamb that was slain, alive again in the midst of the throne; and viewing this, we behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: so that it can still be said, In the mount Jehovah is seen. This is the same that is set forth in the Lord's supper, to the view of a church of the Lord's disciples, assembling on his day, to shew his death till he come: and there they behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. If we rejoice to see this, if we see it and are glad, then we are of faith, and are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Christ three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.

MATTH. xii. 40.

As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

THIS text has become difficult, by understanding the heart of the earth to be nothing else but the grave: for, supposing it to mean only the grave, it cannot appear, that the Son of man was three nights there, as Jonah was in the whale's belly. But, to get rid of this great difficulty, the crucifixion is, by some, put a day back; and they alledge, that the Lord (who eat the paschal supper when it ought to be done, Luke xxii. 7. 8.) did eat it in the evening of the day before it was eaten by the Jews; and this they would shew from John xviii. 28. where it is said, "Then "led they Jesus from Cajaphas into the hall of judgment, "and it was early; and they themselves went not into the "judgment-hall," lest they should be defiled, "but that they "might

" might eat the paſſover." Yet it cannot appear from this " eating the paſſover," that they did not eat the paſchal lamb the night before: for we ſee, from Numb. xxviii. 16. to 25. That on the fourteenth day of the firſt month was the paſſover, and in the fifteenth day, the firſt of the ſeven, was a holy convocation, wherein they offered bullocks, lambs, a ram, with meat-offerings, and a goat for a ſin-offering: and we find all this ſacrificing, which continued throughout the ſeven days, expreſsly called the paſſover in theſe words, (Deut. xvi. 2. 3.), " Thou ſhalt ſacrifice the " paſſover unto the Lord thy God of the flock and the herd. " —— Thou ſhalt eat no leavened bread with it; ſeven " days ſhalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith." The Jews therefore were ſtill eating the paſſover, on that firſt day of the ſeven, though they had eaten the paſchal lamb in the evening before: and how then can it be made appear, that the Lord did not eat the paſchal lamb, according to the inſtitution, at the ſame time with the Jews? And thus the difficulty ariſing from the ſuppoſition, that the " heart of the " earth" is the ſepulchre, cannot be removed by what John ſays of the Jews eating the paſſover on the day after the Lord had eaten it.

But where is the neceſſity, or what is the ground, for ſaying, that the heart of the earth is only the grave? Why may it not as well ſignify the depth of his humiliation? for that ſtands oppoſed to his high exaltation (Eph. iv. 9. 10.) in theſe words, " He deſcended firſt into the lower " parts of the earth;" even as his exaltation is there expreſſed, by aſcending " up far above all heavens." Now, it may as well be ſaid, that he was in the lower parts of the earth, and in the heart of the earth, the night before his crucifixion, as when his body was in the ſepulchre: for then it was that he began to be ſore amazed, and very heavy, was in an agony, ſweating blood, and then he could ſay, " My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful unto death:" and this anſwers better to Jonah in the whale's belly, than even the grave. His prayer, in his agony, was fitly prefigured by Jonah, who ſays, (chap. ii. 2 7.), " I cried, by reaſon of " my affliction, unto the Lord. — Out of the belly of hell " cried I. — When my ſoul fainted within me, I remem- " bered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, in- " to thine holy temple." And Chriſt ſays in the pſalms, (lxxi. 20.), Thou " which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore " troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up

" again from the depths of the earth." The raiſing of him from the dead, who, being made a curſe for us, died by the curſe, was doing a far greater thing than raiſing a dead body from the grave. In that night of the agony, Jeſus began to drink that cup which the Father gave him to drink; and it was finiſhed in his death, before he lay in the grave: when, therefore, he was reckoning the nights of his extreme humiliation, the night of his agony, being the chief and firſt, could not be out of the reckoning. The ſorrows of death compaſſed him, the pains of hell found him, and he found trouble and ſorrow in that night. He was in the ſtate of the dead, and under the power of death, the two following nights: and thus he anſwered to Jonah, three nights in the whale's belly.

Jonah was a remarkable type of Chriſt, in his death and reſurrection, and the preaching of repentance and remiſſion of ſins in his name to the Gentiles. But what ſhall we make of the ſtrange untoward temper that he ſhewed againſt God's mercy to the Ninevites repenting at his preaching? Is not that very like the pride and ill-nature of the Jews, that appeared againſt the divine mercy and grace manifeſted in the goſpel, particularly in granting to the Gentiles repentance unto life? They thought they did God good ſervice in perſecuting to death the diſciples of Chriſt, eſpecially ſuch as proclaimed the grace of the Lord Jeſus to the Gentiles; even as Jonah thought he did well to be angry, complaining to God of his mercy to the Ninevites, and wanting to ſee them deſtroyed.

The Error of the SADDUCEES.

MARK xii. 24.

And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto them, Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the ſcriptures, neither the power of God?

THE Sadducees, who ſaid, " There is no reſurrection," objected to the Lord's known doctrine of the reſurrection. by a queſtion taken from a paſſage in the ſcriptures of Moſes, to which they ſuppoſed the ſtate of the reſurrection irreconcileable, verſ. 18.—23.

His anſwer to their queſtion begins with ſhewing from whence their error, in denying the reſurrection of the dead, flowed:

ſowed: it came through their ignorance of the ſcriptures, and of the power of God, which they ſhould have known; and he declares (verſ. 27.), that their error, through this ignorance, was great. How then knew they not the ſcriptures, nor the power of God? and how were they led into this great error through this ignorance?

Denying the reſurrection, they "knew not the ſcriptures." They were not ignorant of the letter of Moſes' law, from which they drew their queſtion; but the ſpirit of that law, or the chief intention and great ſcope of it, they knew not, nor did they acknowledge it. Even the Phariſees, who thought they had eternal life in the ſcriptures, and confeſſed the reſurrection, from expreſs declarations in the prophets, were ignorant of Chriſt as the end of the law for righteouſneſs; and ſo knew not the ſpirit of it: and becauſe they knew not the voices of the prophets read every Sabbath, they fulfilled them in condemning him. And thus they alſo erred greatly, through their ignorance of the ſcriptures.

But the Sadducees, appealing to Moſes, whoſe letter ſpoke to the nation of Iſrael, only concerning this temporal life and this world, denied the reſurrection and life eternal. And as to any thing like that in the prophets, (by whom they ſhould have known it), they could underſtand them to be ſpeaking only of a temporal reſtoration from a ſtate of great diſtreſs and affliction, and of the life and happineſs of this world, even the earthly life in the holy land; as ſome Chriſtian interpreters have alſo explained them. Even in arguing againſt the reſurrection of the dead, they had no other notion of it, but of reſtoring them again to this world, to live in it as before. And this appears from their queſtion, (verſ. 23.), and the Lord's anſwer, (verſ. 25. with Luke xx. 34. 35. 36.), diſtinguiſhing that world from this, and the heavenly eternal life from this temporal life, wherein generation and corruption take place.

The Sadducees knew that the people of Iſrael ſtood in a peculiar relation to God, who made them ſpring from Abraham his friend, freed them from Egyptian bondage, and entered into a covenant with them, as his holy nation and peculiar people, to be their God, and ſo to give them a happy life in the land promiſed to their fathers, according to his covenant with them, whereby the national life and happineſs was connected with the national righteouſneſs, in cleaving to their God and ſerving him. But death, taking

them away from the nation, diſſolved this relation to the God of that nation, who ſhewed his diſpleaſure, at their diſobedience, in temporal calamities, and his favour by the good things of this life, national proſperity, and the enjoyments of this world: for the dead, ſeeing no more the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living, nor worſhipping and ſerving him there, and being incapable of ſharing in the national happineſs or miſery, had no more part in that relation to God, which the Sadducees underſtood not to be figurative of the eternal relation of the eternal God to the true Iſrael, who "ſhall be ſaved with an everlaſting ſalva-"tion:" and ſo they could not think of any relation wherein he ſtood to the dead, from whence there could be any hope of life from the dead to them. They thought of him only as the God of the living, in oppoſition to the dead: therefore, knowing only the letter, and being ignorant of the ſpirit of their law, they knew not the ſcriptures, and ſo erred, denying the reſurrection.

They erred thus, "not knowing the power of God," which Abraham knew, whoſe faith anſwered to God making the dead alive, and calling beings from nothing. They underſtood the divine eternal power, as ſhewed in the conſcience of every man, by the works of creation. And they might learn from Moſes of the formation of the firſt man, making him alive from the duſt of the ground: yea, acknowledging the ſcriptures of Moſes, they could not but obſerve divine power working beyond nature, and controlling it, in the miracles by which Iſrael ſprang from Abraham's dead body, and Sarah's barren womb, and became a great nation, ſettled in the land of promiſe, being delivered from Egyptian bondage, by a ſtrong hand and outſtretched arm. And from this they ought to have underſtood the power that raiſeth the dead, even as did Abraham believing the promiſe: for how could they who believed the miracles narrated by Moſes, think it "a thing incredible, that God "ſhould raiſe the dead?" But ſo thought the Sadducees, denying the reſurrection: and ſo, not knowing, nor acknowledging the divine ſupernatural power, they were ignorant of the ſcriptures and of the power of God at once.

Now, to theſe Sadducees, the Lord (verſ. 26. 27.) ſhews the reſurrection, even from the letter of Moſes, to which they appealed, and according to which they explained the prophets. When Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, were now for a long time dead, from all temporal relation to God, and

and could have no more benefit by it, God declares himself to Moses, at the bush, to be still their God. But he is not owning his relation to them who are to have no benefit by it: he would not call himself their God who are dead, if he were not to make them alive, according to the faith wherein they died, and whereby they stood in a relation to him that death had not dissolved. If, therefore, he be yet their God, whose temporal relation to him is dissolved by death, they must have life from the dead of him, who is the God of the living: they must appear to be his children, by being the children of the resurrection; otherwise he doth nothing for them worthy of himself, as their God and Father. They died desiring the heavenly country: "Where-"fore," it is said (Heb. xi. 16.), "God is not ashamed to "be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a "city," *i. e.* the new, the heavenly Jerusalem, to be eternally possessed by the children of the resurrection.

The Scribe near God's Kingdom.

Mark xii. 28.—34.

— And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

By the parallel place in Matthew (chap. xxii. 34. 35.) it appears, this man was *one of the Pharisees*, and a *lawyer*. As a Pharisee, he was well pleased with the Lord's answer to the opposite sect, saying, (as in Luke xx. 39.), "Master, "thou hast well said." As a lawyer, he would put Jesus to the trial, as a teacher, upon his knowledge and discernment in the commandments of that law by which he had put the Sadducees to silence. Having heard the Lord speak of them that should be accounted worthy to obtain the resurrection to eternal life, (Luke xx. 35. 36.), he supposed, as did the rest of his sect, that this must be by their keeping the commandments of the law, which promised life to the obedient, in the nation of Israel. And when he applied the law (that promised national happiness to obedience, and cursed the disobedient with temporal evils, and death) unto eternal life from the dead, he might well doubt if he, or any other man, could be accounted worthy to obtain

obtain that life, by keeping the whole without offending in any one: and therefore he inquires for the great and chief commandment of the law, by the keeping of which men might be accounted worthy of that eternal life. This is much like them that go about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own in the Chriſtian religion, who, not finding themſelves diſpoſed, nor capable to obſerve all things whatſoever Chriſt hath commanded, inquire after ſome main thing in his religion, the fundamental and eſſential part of it, if, by exerciſing themſelves ſincerely in that, they might become righteous, and be accounted worthy to obtain eternal life, through God's mercy pardoning their failings and ſhortcomings as to things of leſſer moment.

Our Lord, by his anſwer to this ſcribe, leads him in to the ſpirit of the law, and gives him the ſum of the whole, in the words of Moſes, Deut. vi. 4. 5. Lev. xix. 18. He ſays, "The firſt of all the commandments is, Hear, O Iſrael, "the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou ſhalt love the "Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, "and with all thy mind. This is the firſt and great com- "mandment. And the ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſhalt "love thy neighbour as thyſelf: there is none other com- "mandment greater than theſe. On theſe two command- "ments hang all the law and the prophets." He calls the ſecond of theſe two "like unto" the firſt: for love to our neighbour as ourſelves, is the offſpring of love to the Lord our God, and is the grand proof and evidence of our love to him, which cannot appear without this love to our neighbour. (See 1 John iv. 20. 23. and chap. iii. 17.): And therefore his apoſtle makes this ſecond the ſum of the law, Gal. v. 14. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word; in this, "Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." See likewiſe Rom. xiii. 8. 9. 10. Matth. xix. 18. 19. with James ii. 8. to 13.* Theſe two commandments, the ſecond ſhewing the

* This love to our neighbour is required to be, as to ourſelves. However we be called to deny ourſelves, in doing good to our neighbour, or in ſuffering harm and bearing patiently wrongs done to us; and though the love of ourſelves, aſide from, or any way in oppoſition to God and our neighbour, be, as luſt, forbidden in both commandments; yet there is a ſelf-love, wherewith God inſpired man when he breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, that is not only conſiſtent with the love of God and our neighbour, but intwiſted with it, and expreſsly commanded in the law; ſo that ſinning

the firſt, as its likeneſs, comprehend the whole law of eternal life and death, according to which the one lawgiver ſaves and deſtroys: for "on theſe two hang all the law and the "prophets."

ning againſt God and our neighbour is ſinning againſt ourſelves, and ſinning againſt ourſelves is ſinning againſt them. The love of ourſelves, that is natural and ſuppoſed good in the law, is thereby made the meaſure and ſtandard of the required love to our neighbour: Matth. vii. 12. "Whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do "to you, do you even ſo to them: for this is the law and the pro-"phets." Do thyſelf no harm, is a direction for working no ill to our neighbour. The love of a huſband to his wife is injoined thus, Eph. v. 28. "So ought men to love their wives as their own "bodies: he that loveth his wife, loveth himſelf:" and a man's love to his own fleſh, nouriſhing and cheriſhing it, is ſuppoſed natural, and much commended. On the other hand, mens "diſho-"louring their own bodies between themſelves," is ſet forth as the great iniquity of thoſe who are abandoned of God, for diſhonour done to him.

It is manifeſt, from Matth. xix. 18. 19. Rom. chap. 13. and James chap. 2. that this command of love to our neighbour as ourſelves, is the ſum of the ſecond table of the law, writ by the finger of God, on the two tables, to the nation of Iſrael. But it goes much farther than the letter of that law: for it requires that all our obedience to that ſecond table be from love to our neighbour as ourſelves, in connection with loving God in the firſt place. In this view, it makes us ſinners, and liable to eternal damnation, by the work of the oppoſite luſt in our hearts; it requires love to our enemies, and it makes us tranſgreſſors when we "deſpiſe the poor," and "have" even that "reſpect of perſons" which James finds fault with, chap. ii. 1.—9.

Our neighbour, whom this command obliges us to love, is every man: for though they who are of the truth be the peculiar objects of the complacence of this love, rejoicing in the truth, and delighting in them that are of it, for its ſake, according to the epiſtles of John, where we are forbid to love, with this brotherly love, the world that hates the truth, as that is the reverſe of love to God; yet there is an honour due to all men, as made in the image of God, who maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and unjuſt, and whoſe loving-kindneſs towards man appears in Chriſt's giving himſelf a ranſom for all ſorts of men without difference: and therefore, if we love God, we muſt reſpect and love them with benevolence and good-will. We ſee, from Rom. chap. 13. that the love required toward mankind, reſpects them in all the relations wherein God hath placed them to us in this world: and to be without natural affection is a damnable ſin, Rom. i. 31. 32.

This command not only requires, giving to all men what is their due, and what they have any right to, but, beyond that, doing them

" prophets." He that fulfils these, keeps the whole; and he that offends in these, keeps no commandment of God. The reward of this obedience is eternal life, (Luke x. 25. to 28.), even as the curse is inseparable from all disobedience and every transgression.

Though this be far beyond what the scribe was asking for, yet he is obliged to confess the truth of it, and declare the obedience of these two great commandments to be " more " than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices," verf. 33. The Lord approves of his answer, and takes notice of his discretion, in preferring this obedience to all the sacrifices of the law. For, 1. His apostle shews us, that all these sacrifices could not satisfy for one transgression of this law; so that God was not pleased in them, nor was the sinner made perfect by them, as pertaining to the conscience: for tho' they sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, they could do no more but prefigure, thereby, the true sacrifice that purges the conscience from dead works, even the transgressions of these two great commandments. 2. The fulfilment of these pleases God, which all these sacrifices could not do. Christ, by fulfilling this law, pleased his Father: and, by this, his offering was truly without spot and blemish, when he was made a sin-offering for the transgressors of this law, to redeem them from its curse.

Now, to this scribe, confessing the righteousness that pleases God, who was not pleased with all the sacrifices of the law, the Lord says, verf. 34. " Thou art not far from the " kingdom of God." For, 1. He was not so far from it as they who supposed they might have a title to that kingdom, by keeping the letter of the ten words, and by strictly observing the things that served to distinguish the Jews from the Gentiles, and those things which distinguished the most devout and zealous Jews from the more profane and lukewarm. In opposition to this, and every thing else in this way, he confessed that righteousness by which alone men

them good from grace and undeserved favour. To do as we would be done by, is doing mercy, as well as justice and equity. The effect of our love to God's name, must be, loving mercy, as well as doing justly; doing, as we have opportunity, good to all men, especially to the household of faith, as well as rendering to all their dues: for " he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath done " no mercy," James ii. 13. After giving to all their dues, and owing no man any thing in that way, we still owe love: and to him that said, " Who is my neighbour?" the Lord pointed out any one that needed his mercy.

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can inherit God's kingdom, or enter into it. 2. When he confeſſed this, he did not pretend to be any way capable to do this righteouſneſs, or to fulfil that law of righteouſneſs; nor did he go about to excuſe or juſtify himſelf, in any ſhortcoming of what it required, like that lawyer (Luke x. 25.—29.) who, "willing to juſtify himſelf, ſaid unto Jeſus, "And who is my neighbour?" As all conceit of our own merit keeps us at the greateſt diſtance from God's kingdom, and we cannot enter it without being converted from that pride; certainly, amongſt all that are not entering, the neareſt to it are thoſe who know themſelves unworthy of it, and cannot pretend any right or claim to it, as not having the righteouſneſs of that kingdom.

How then did he not enter? and what kept him back, when he was not far from it? He only wanted to know and acknowledge this, that the Son of God came to fulfil that ſame law for the tranſgreſſors of it, that they might be made righteous by his obedience, and delivered from its curſe, by his being made a curſe for them: for this *knowledge* of the goſpel of the kingdom, is the *key* that opens the door of entrance into it, which the "lawyers, the ſcribes, and "Phariſees," had "taken away," when they "ſhut up the "kingdom of heaven againſt men," and "entered not, "and forbade them that were entering," Matth. xxiii. 13. Luke xi. 52. We become the people of God's kingdom, and he becomes our God, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, when he juſtifies us by this faith, Rom. iii. 29. 30. And we paſs out of the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, in knowing ſalvation by the remiſſion of our ſins, or in believing "redemption through his blood, "the forgiveneſs of ſins," Luke i. 77. 78. 79. Col. i. 13. 14. There is no true love to God, or our neighbour, in us, but what comes of this knowledge, or this "faith which "worketh by love:" for (1 Tim. i. 5.) "the end of the com-"mandment is love out of a pure heart," and that comes "of a good conſcience," and that again "of unfeigned "faith," knowing and believing in the heart, as we confeſs with the mouth, the righteouſneſs of our God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt to be, by itſelf, ſufficient to make us worthy to obtain eternal life.

The true GRACE of GOD.

1 PETER v. 12.

I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

SOme have thought that Peter, as the apostle of the circumcision, writes this epistle to the Christian Jews, as being strangers dispersed into several countries of the Lesser Asia: for they cannot reckon the natives living in their countries, "strangers of the dispersion," as Peter calls them; but, chap. ii. 10. plainly forbids this thought. He says of them, "Which in time past" were "not a people, but" are "now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, "but now have obtained mercy." And ver. 11. he calls this new people of God, "strangers and pilgrims;" even as all true Christians, Gentiles as well as Jews, are strangers and sojourners in this world. Therefore that oldest remain of Christian antiquity, after the scriptures, the epistle writ from Rome to Corinth by Clement, has this inscription, "The church of God sojourning in Rome, to the church "of God sojourning in Corinth." Peter, here speaking of these strangers on earth, this new people or church of God, coming in place of his ancient "holy nation," under the notion of a building, or house of God, gives us his own interpretation of those words the Lord had spoken to him when he first confessed him, "Thou art Peter, and upon "this rock will I build my church," when he says, (chap. ii. 4. 5.), "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, ye also "as living stones, are built up a spiritual house." If therefore we believe Peter, we must be persuaded, that the foundation-stone, or rock, whereon the church is built, is the Lord himself, that rock, in his confession, from which he got the name *Peter* or *Cephas*, interpreted a stone. Now, as the stones of that building, the church of Christ, are not of the Jews only, but much more of the Gentiles; so Peter writes not here to the Jews only, but also to the Gentiles, builded together with them in Christ. And it cannot appear, that the apostles placed the believing Jews and Gentiles; who were neighbours in any place, into different churches by themselves; tho' that also has been imagined.

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The ſame thing that is ſaid of Peter, writing to the "ſtrangers of the diſperſion," has been alſo ſaid of James, writing "to the twelve tribes in the diſperſion:" for tho' he plainly writes to Chriſtians, it ſeems, they who think thus, cannot conceive how the true Iſrael, begotten of the incorruptible ſeed of the word preached by the twelve apoſtles, can be called the twelve tribes; though, in the Revelation, the multitude of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, of which 144,000 are ſealed, be ſpoke of as twelve tribes; and there the new Jeruſalem has twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb. But James, writing to all Chriſtians, calls them the twelve tribes, even as the Lord had ſaid to his apoſtles, they ſhould ſit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael. They that think otherwiſe, have the Chriſtian world that is now, and Chriſtian nations and countries, ſo much in mind, that they cannot think of the diſperſion of the Chriſtian church through many countries, even when there was no nation or province profeſſing Chriſtianity. But if they ſay, the twelve tribes are the Jews, becauſe James was moſt converſant among the Jews at Jeruſalem, where they reſorted from all the countries where they were diſperſed; may they not, as well, apply to the Jews the general epiſtle of John, who, together with James and Peter, gave the right hands of fellowſhip to the apoſtle of the Gentiles and Barnabas, that they ſhould be to the Gentiles, and they to the circumciſion? If, notwithſtanding this, Paul wrote to the Hebrews, what hindered them to write to the Gentiles? For as he, in his epiſtles to the Romans and Corinthians, writes to the brethren of the circumciſion, as well as thoſe of the uncircumciſion, joined together in the ſame churches; ſo Peter, and James, and John, write to both without difference.

Peter ſays here, he has written by Silvanus; probably the ſame with *Silas*, whom Paul alſo calls *Silvanus*, and who accompanied him in his travels amongſt the Gentiles, as well as Jews, in thoſe parts where they were now ſojourning, to whom Peter writes, and whom he ſuppoſes well acquainted with Silvanus. And when he teſtifies of the grace they were ſtanding in as true, we may perceive him harmonizing with Paul, by whoſe miniſtry they had been brought to the knowledge of that grace, and ſtood confirmed in the faith of it; even as, in his ſecond epiſtle, he recommends the epiſtles of his beloved brother Paul, placing them on a footing with the reſt of the ſcriptures.

The true grace of God ſtands here oppoſed to a falſe grace; ſuch as, we may ſuppoſe, that for which the Phariſee (Luke xviii. 10.) thanked God, as thinking it made him more meet for acceptance with him, and a fitter object of his favour, than the publican; or ſuch grace as the Jews were expecting to come to them by the falſe Meſſiah they were looking for. They ſought after grace helping them to work the works of God for eternal life; in oppoſition to which, the true Meſſiah told them, he came down from heaven, ſent by his Father, to give his fleſh and blood a ſacrifice for the life of the world. They wanted grace bringing them national ſalvation and proſperity; and, in oppoſition to this, he told them he came to give eternal life from the death to which they muſt follow him bearing their croſs.

In this epiſtle the apoſtle ſets forth the grace that he teſtifies of as true, in this manner:

Chap. i. 10. 11. "Of which ſalvation the prophets have "inquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the "grace that ſhould come unto you; ſearching what, or "what manner of time, the Spirit of Chriſt which was in "them did ſignify, when it teſtified, beforehand, the ſuf"ferings of Chriſt, and the glories after theſe." Ver. 13. —"Hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto you "at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt." Chap. v. 1. 10. "A "witneſs of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and alſo a partaker of "the glory that ſhall be revealed.——The God of all "grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt "Jeſus, after that ye have ſuffered a while, make you per"fect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you." The ſaving grace foretold by the prophets, and the whole ſalvation it brings to us, is comprehended in the ſufferings of Chriſt for us, and in the glory after theſe, wherein we partake with him, and which will be all revealed, and brought to us at his ſecond appearing.

Verſ. 18.—21. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible "things,—but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a "lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot: who verily was "foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was "manifeſt in theſe laſt times for you, who by him do be"lieve in God, that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave "him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." This agrees with Paul's account of God's grace, 2 Cor. v. 19. 20. 21. and vi. 1. where the grace of God is his reconciling the world to himſelf in Chriſt, making "him, who knew "no

" no sin," to be " sin for us, that we might be made the " righteousness of God in him." Thus (Heb. ii. 9. 10.) he, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and became a perfect Saviour by his sufferings, bringing many sons to glory. And this is the grace of the Lord Jesus, well known to the first Christians, and moving them to gracious works, or almsdeeds, 2 Cor. viii. 9. " For ye know the " grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, " yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his po- " verty might be rich ;" *i. e.* Though he knew no sin, yet, for us, he became sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is the grace of God, that appeared to be bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, (vers. 1. 2.), by their liberal almsgiving in their deep poverty and affliction ; even as Paul reckoned all the Philippians partakers with him of grace, by their communication unto the gospel, having him in their heart, both in his bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, Phil. i. 5. 7. When the Galatians were seduced to think of something else, as necessary to their being in favour with God, besides the cross of Christ, he says to them, (Gal. i. 6.), " I marvel " that ye are so soon removed from him that called you in- " to the grace of Christ, unto another gospel." He had preached the gospel of the grace of God, evidently setting forth Christ crucified among them, and they had received it gladly, and in much love : and so he marvels that they were so soon disposed to hearken to those that gave another account of God's grace, serving to make them doubt if Christ crucified was sufficient to justify them without circumcision, and keeping the precepts of Moses : and he says to them, (chap. v. 4.), " Christ is become of no effect to you, " whosoever of you are justified by the law ; ye are fallen " from grace." And this is agreeable to what Peter said on the same subject, Acts xv 10. 11. " Why tempt ye God, " to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither " our fathers nor we were able to bear? But, through the " grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe to be saved, " even as they." When men are seen, believing to be saved by this grace, then is the grace of God seen in them ; Christ is in them, his Spirit, the Spirit of grace, dwells in them : for he is the Spirit of the truth, and the Spirit of faith, in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Chap. ii. 24. " Who his own self bare our sins in his own " body on the tree, that we, being dead by sin, might live " by

" by righteouſneſs: by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed." And chap. iii. 18. " Chriſt alſo hath once ſuffered for ſins, the " juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God; be- " ing put to death by the fleſh, but made alive by the Spi- " rit." As our tranſlators have given, " by the Spirit, for τω πνευματι; there is no reaſon why they might not have done the ſame throughout theſe texts, as, " by the fleſh," and " by ſin," and " by righteouſneſs: for ſo they have done in ſeveral other places; as may be ſeen by this inſtance or two; Rom. i. 20. τοις ποιημασι νοουμενα; " Being under- " ſtood by the things that are made." Rom. xi. 20. συ τη πιστει ἑστηκας; " Thou ſtandeſt by faith." And, in like manner, Rom. vi. 10. 11. 12. might be fitly rendered thus: " For " in that he died, he died by ſin once; but in that he li- " veth, he liveth by God: likewiſe reckon ye alſo your- " ſelves to be dead indeed by ſin, but alive by God, in Je- " ſus Chriſt our Lord: let not ſin therefore reign in your " mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof."

Now, in this grace, of which Peter in this manner teſtifies, he ſays, they to whom he writes were ſtanding: and there was no way of ſtanding in the grace *reported* to them, by them that preached the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven, but by the faith of that report. The heart is " eſtabliſhed by grace," being eſtabliſhed in the faith; and we " fail of the grace of God," as our " faith fails:" and ſo Paul tells the Corinthians, (2 Cor. i. 24.), " By faith ye ſtand." Standing in this grace, they miniſtered it one to another, in their confeſſion, or joint profeſſion of the faith of it, and in the exerciſe of their gifts of teaching and exhorting, ſpeaking ſo of this grace, as to miniſter it to the hearers; who, taſting that the Lord is gracious, as new-born babes deſired the ſincere milk of the word, to grow thereby; and holding forth that grace, by doing the works of grace, out of the ability that God gave. Thus they were ſtanding in the true grace of God, in oppoſition to the falſe; believing in Chriſt riſen for righteouſneſs, loving the grace and gift of righteouſneſs, and one another, for the ſake of it, not in word and in tongue, but in work and in truth, and hoping for the grace to be brought them at the appearing of Chriſt; even as they were begotten to a lively hope by his reſurrection.

By the true grace of God, wherein they were ſtanding, he exhorts to meekneſs and patience in ſuffering; — to holineſs, in oppoſition to their former luſts in their ignorance of

of grace, and to abſtinence from the fulfilment of fleſhly luſts, warring againſt their ſouls; — to humility and ſobriety, watching unto prayer; — above all, to fervent charity amongſt themſelves. By the ſufferings of Chriſt, and following glory, he exhorts them as ſubjects and as ſervants, elders or biſhops, and the younger brethren, wives and their huſbands, as joint heirs of the grace of life; in a word, he exhorts all to "honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear "God, honour the king." If we be ſtanding in this grace, we will be diſpoſed to hearken to all this exhortation; but if not, we know not the grace of God in truth.

He ſays, he has "written briefly," exhorting and teſtifying: and ſo it might well be ſaid, conſidering the great ſubject of his teſtimony, and the many ſubjects of his exhortation. In the epiſtle to the Hebrews, this is uſed as an argument to perſuade them to bear with the word of exhortation, Heb. xiii. 22. "I beſeech you, brethren, ſuffer the "word of exhortation: for I have written a letter to you "in few words." When the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem wrote for the Gentiles, and ſent to Antioch, a brief epiſtle, which was the firſt part of the New-teſtament revelation committed to writing, Acts xv. we ſee Judas and Silas, who came along with it, exhorted and confirmed the brethren with much diſcourſe, verſ. 32. And this ſhews the uſe of paſtors and teachers: for though they can teach nothing but what is ſet forth in the ſcriptures, nor exhort to any thing but what is called for there; yet, becauſe the ſubjects of teaching and exhortation are briefly written of there, their uſe is, to exhort and confirm the brethren with much diſcourſe. And it is the duty of the brethren to ſuffer the word of exhortation from them.

AN

An Obſervation on PAUL's Epiſtle to the ROMANS, humbly offered to the Conſideration of the DISPUTERS againſt POPERY.

ROM. i. 18.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1735.]

THE corruption of the Chriſtian inſtitution, foretold in the New Teſtament, appears too much every where, but is to be found in perfection in the Roman church.

If this had been plainly declared in the epiſtle to that church, and the ſeveral evils that have taken place there, had been directly and expreſsly pointed at, with ſpecial warnings againſt them, the Chriſtian religion could not have been ſo corrupted by the profeſſors of it, as it has been in that ſociety.

Yet, ſince the corruption of Chriſtianity has come to its height, it may appear, that Paul, in his epiſtle to that church, has given ſufficient cautions againſt the evils that have prevailed there, and that in ſuch a manner, as abundantly manifeſts the divine wiſdom and foreknowledge whereby he was directed in the writing of that epiſtle.

The following inſtances may ſerve to clear this.

1. The great doctrine of juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, is more inſiſted on in this epiſtle, than any where elſe in the New Teſtament; and no ſociety that goes under the Chriſtian name, has ſwerved more from that bleſſed doctrine, maintaining the merit of good works, as it were in an expreſs contradiction to the very words of the apoſtle. And when we conſider that the reformation from the corruption of Chriſtianity, had its firſt beginnings, in the bringing of this doctrine to light, by this ſame epiſtle, againſt the church of Rome, we cannot but think, there was a ſpecial reaſon for the directing of that doctrine to the Romans.

2. When the apoſtle is ſetting forth the ſinful ſtate of mankind,

mankind, to ſhew the neceſſity of free juſtification through the redemption that is in Chriſt, he repreſents both Jews and Gentiles as acting the ſame part, with reſpect to the light they had, and the diſcoveries of God made to them, which the Romans have ſince acted, with reference to the goſpel.

The Gentiles, who had not the benefit of the written law, yet had God manifeſted to them in his works, and they ſhewed the work of the law written in their hearts; they did, by nature, "the offices of the law*" to themſelves, and ſo were a law to themſelves: but they detained the truth in unrighteouſneſs; for though they knew, that they who did ſuch things were worthy of death, and ſo were not ignorant of the judgment of God againſt ſin; they not only did the ſame, but conſented with them that did them. And thoſe things they did, have had as much place in the Roman church, and have been as much tolerated in its communion, as ever they were among the Gentiles. Compare Rom. i. from ver. 28. to the end, with 2 Tim. chap. ii. from ver. 1. to 5. And ſo the outer court of the Lord's houſe was trodden under foot of the Gentiles.

The Gentiles did not give up with the notion of a God altogether, nor with the diſcovery of him made to them in his works, but they corrupted it miſerably. They did not glorify God as diſcovered to them, nor were they thankful, "but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh "heart was darkened; profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they "became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible "God into" various images, "and changed the truth of God "into a lie, and worſhipped and ſerved the creature beſide "the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever." Is not this account of the corruption of the natural diſcovery of God, and of the origin of idolatry among the Gentiles, very applicable to the corruption of the goſpel-revelation, and to the riſe of idolatry among Chriſtians? The changing of the glory of God diſcovered in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, by the goſpel, into any image of their own framing, and the worſhipping of the creature beſide the Creator, or of ſaints beſide the Sanctifier, is a crime more highly aggravated, and leſs excuſable in the Roman church, than was the idolatry of Rome Heathen.

And, if we only put in the Chriſtian law for the Jewiſh, and baptiſm for circumciſion, what can be more pertinent-

* Τὰ τῦ νόμυ.

ly ſaid to the corrupted Roman church, or to any church that is agreeable to her in that corruption, than the apoſtle's diſcourſe for the conviction of the Jews, in chap. ii. from verſ. 17. to the end?

3. And it is not for nought that he writes to the Romans of the neceſſary connection betwixt juſtification and ſanctification, and of holineſs, as inſeparable from the Chriſtian faith, chap. vi. vii. and viii. Was it not in the foreknowledge of the diſtinction betwixt *Chriſtians*, or *members of the church of Chriſt*, and *ſaints*, which has ſince taken place among the Romans, that the apoſtle wrote to them all under the common name of *ſaints?* chap. i. ver. 6. 7. 8. And when he repreſents his higheſt attainments in ſanctification, chap. vii. he ſets forth the power of ſin dwelling in him, and his own weakneſs, in ſuch a manner as effectually ruins the affair of works of ſupererogation.

All who copy after the church of Rome, in holding many as Chriſtians and members of Chriſt's church, who appear to be no ſaints, and in magnifying the holineſs of ſome beyond the meaſure of the New Teſtament, would do well to take notice of the apoſtle's inſinuation on this head to the Romans.

4. His diſcourſes of God's grace, directed to the ſtaining of the pride of all glorying, and to the glorifying of the divine mercy in Chriſt, in our ſalvation by him, are exceedingly well fitted to the making void of all the mighty boaſtings of the church of Rome. If the Romans had always attended to what he ſays to the Jews, to ſtain the pride of their glorying over the Gentiles, or to what he ſays to the Gentiles, chap. xi. to hide pride from them, could they ever have arrived to that intolerable pitch of pride and glorying in their church ſtate and privileges, wherein they have outſtripped the very Jews? For if what is brought to quell the pride of the Jews, be not a ſufficient caution to them, they have an expreſs warning given them as Gentiles grafted into Chriſt *, when the Jews were broken off from him, and the relation they had to him by the promiſe to their fathers, (as being the people of whom he came, according to the fleſh), ſo that they could have no ſtanding in him now, but *by faith*, as the Gentiles have.

What can be ſaid more ſtrongly againſt the Roman pride than what the apoſtle ſays in theſe words? "But if thou "boaſt againſt the branches, thou beareſt not the root,

* Compare John xv. 1. 2.

"but

" but the root thee; — and, becauſe of unbelief they were " broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith, be not high mind- " ed, but fear. For if God ſpared not the natural branch- " es, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee; — but toward " thee goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs, other- " wiſe thou alſo ſhalt be cut off."

Is it not to be wondered at, how, after this, the Roman church came to be ſo impudent, as to declare herſelf infallible?

5. And if the Romans had hearkened to that earneſt exhortation, chap. xii. ver. 1. 2. to devote themſelves to ſufferings for Chriſt, and " not to be conformed to this world, " but transformed by the renewing of their minds, that " they might prove what is the will of God," could they have ſeparated Chriſtianity from the croſs, and turned it into a worldly religion, in the manner wherein they have done, as if it had been " the acceptable will of God," that it ſhould be ſo, and that the order and government of his church ſhould be conformed to that of the kingdoms of this earth, and that they ſhould devote themſelves to reign in this world?

6. Next, we find the apoſtle plainly attacking that pride and love of pre-eminence, whereby the comely order inſtituted by Chriſt, among the officers and members of the churches, has been moſt remarkably broke through in the Roman church, chap. xii. 3.—16. In doing this, he makes a full enumeration of the ordinary offices and officers in the church, and calls every one with humble diligence to keep himſelf in his own ſphere; and inſiſts on the new commandment of brotherly-love, with ſelf-denial, in ſeveral branches of it, to be obſerved diligently toward one another, as members of one body: and if this had been carefully obſerved, the offices of the church could not have been ſo multiplied, nor could the officers have lorded over one another, and over the flock, as they have done.

7. Then he as plainly bends his diſcourſe againſt the pride whereby that church has ſet herſelf above the ſecular powers, and made uſe of them as revengers to execute her wrath upon ſuch as ſhe conſtructed her adverſaries, chap. xiii. But in the tranſition from the church, and the work of pride there, to the magiſtrate, and the work of pride with reſpect to him, chap. xii. 14. 17.—21. he gives a moſt ſolemn exhortation againſt the Roman zeal, under its proper name of *revenge*, and ſhews that it is indeed no victory over the

enemies of the church that is obtained in the way of our "avenging ourſelves;" but that the true way to overcome them, is, by doing them good, and rendering good for evil.

Then he calls "every ſoul to be ſubject to the higher "powers." In oppoſition to this, the Roman clergy have ſtudied to ſet themſelves above the kings of the earth, who have "given their ſtrength unto them," and become their miniſters or ſervants, to execute their vengeance againſt all who would not ſubmit to their authority. They have reſiſted theſe powers more than any ſet of men ever did, and yet none have inſiſted more for non-reſiſtance to them; but this was only in ſo far as theſe powers were their miniſters. The clergy came to be above the ſecular powers, by pretending to honour them with the power of keeping both tables of the law, and owning them as the ſucceſſors of the rulers of Iſrael, eſpecially of the kings who ſat on David's throne: thus they made the kings of the earth the rulers of the fear of God, and complimented them with the prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt, "the ſhepherd of God's flock, the "king of Iſrael, to whom God hath given the throne of his "father David;" but they gave them this honour, only to ſerve themſelves of them: for, as they took care to make it their own buſineſs, and not the magiſtrate's, to judge of tranſgreſſions of the firſt table of the law, relating to the fear or worſhip of God, it behoved the magiſtrate to draw his ſword againſt thoſe whom the clergy condemned as tranſgreſſors of the firſt table; and, as they always took as much care, at leaſt, of their own authority in matters of the worſhip of God, as they did of the authority of the great lawgiver, they have been able to make the kings themſelves ſmart for their contempt of their authority.

In oppoſition to all this, the apoſtle commands every Chriſtian to be "ſubject to the powers that be," and refers to the primitive ordinance of God, with reſpect to magiſtracy, before the erection of the church of Iſrael, Gen. ix. 6. "Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood "be ſhed." According to this, the apoſtle declares the magiſtrate to be that miniſter of God, to execute his wrath upon him that injures his neighbour, and he extends it to all injuries done to our neighbour, againſt the ſecond table of the law; and thus he ſhews the full import of that expreſſion in the ordinance of God, with reſpect to the magiſtrate, "whoſo ſheddeth man's blood." He ſpeaks of the ſecond

cond table, with reference to the wrath which the magiſtrate executes, as if there were no other: for, after a particular enumeration of ſeveral evil deeds againſt our neighbour, he ſays, " If there be any other commandment, it is " briefly comprehended in this, Thou ſhalt love thy neigh- " bour as thyſelf," *i. e.* if there be any other commandment, upon which the powers that be, are revengers.

Thus the apoſtle's account of the magiſtrate's office ſaps the foundation of that kingdom of the clergy that is ſupported with ſecular power. And, according to this account of God's ordinance of magiſtracy, both the clergy, and the powers that became the executors of their wrath, were doing evil, even that ſame evil which the magiſtrate was ordained of God, as his miniſter, to puniſh; and ſo the Apocalypſe ſpeaks of the *murders* of the antichriſtian ſociety.

The apoſtle concludes his exhortation on this ſubject, with an incitement to love, in oppoſition to " working ill " to our neighbour;" and plainly inſinuates, that all pretences to zeal for any part of the law of God are vain, while we are working ill to our neighbour, againſt the ſecond table of the law.

Laſtly, What can be more patly ſpoken againſt the Roman uniformity, and all imitations of it, than that which is ſaid by the apoſtle, chap. xiv. and chap. xv. In oppoſition to that uniformity, he concludes his diſcourſe on that ſubject, with pointing out to us the true Chriſtian unity, which cannot ſubſiſt without forbearance in love and ſelf-denial, and which hath Chriſt himſelf for the bond of it. He ſays, " Now the God of patience and conſolation grant " you to be like minded one towards another, according " to Chriſt Jeſus; that ye may with one mind, in one " mouth, glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus " Chriſt." The Roman church departed very early from this good inſtruction of the apoſtle, and began to ſet up for her uniformity, in the affair of the excommunication of the eaſtern churches, who would not obſerve Eaſter on her day.

Inſtead of marking and avoiding the " cauſers of divi- " ſions and offences, contrary to all this doctrine" which the apoſtle taught them in this epiſtle *, the cauſers of ſuch diviſions, " who ſerved not Chriſt, but their own intereſt, " deceived them by their good words, and fair ſpeeches,"

* Chap. xvi. 17. 18.

and

and prevailed among them, to the corrupting of the whole of Chriſtianity, under a form of it, againſt the whole ſcope of this epiſtle.

Though ſuch cauſers of diviſions and offences have prevailed every where, ſo far as to make all thoſe to be reputed cauſers of diviſions and offences, who mark them by the apoſtle's doctrine, and turn away from them, as he directs; yet let not that hinder us from hearkening to his exhortation, in flying from every appearance of theſe evils, againſt which the apoſtle ſets himſelf, in the epiſtle to the Romans: for we ſhall be more ſafe in cleaving to the epiſtle to the Romans, than in cleaving to the Roman church, or any other church, in oppoſition to that epiſtle.

Now, if that church which was planted by the apoſtles, and is ſo highly commended by Paul, as we ſee it in this epiſtle, was yet capable, ſo early, and ſo far to ſwerve from the whole ſcope of his epiſtle to them, and that with the higheſt pretences to Chriſtianity, what ſhall we think of the boaſtings of other churches, ſeparated from her indeed, as being greatly corrupted, but ſtill retaining many things contrary to the doctrine that the apoſtle taught the Romans in this epiſtle?

A general View of the REVELATION.

[Written about the year 1733, and now first printed.]

INTRODUCTION.

THere is a bleſſing promiſed to him that readeth, and to them that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe things that are written therein, chap. i. 3. The things written therein are, the things which John had ſeen, and the things that were preſent when he wrote, and the things that ſhould be thereafter, chap. i. 19.; even all the great things concerning the kingdom of Chriſt on this earth, from the time of its firſt erection which John had ſeen, unto the times of reſtitution of all things, by the ſecond coming of Chriſt, Acts iii. 21. who is ſaid to be coming quickly, chap. i. and chap. ii. For all the things before that coming, which are foretold in this book, are neceſſary preparations for it, and are, one after another, making way for it with ſpeed, under his conduct who is head over all things to his church, and is expecting till his enemies be made his footſtool, Heb. x. 13. and is ſaying to his church, *Surely I come quickly*, chap. xxii. 2. So that while his people long for his coming, they may be ſure of this, that it will be as ſoon as it can be, with a conſiſtency with his glory, and the real intereſt of the whole redeemed body; and that every event is haſtening it forward.

This whole prophecy is directed to the ſeven churches in Aſia, chap. i. and to the people of Chriſt in the churches, chap. xxii. 16. even as moſt part of the New-teſtament ſcripture is expreſsly and immediately directed to the churches: for in the churches of the ſaints the word of Chriſt is to be kept, Acts xvi. 4. explained, 2 Theſſ. ii. 1. obeyed, chap. iv. and xxii. 16. and ii. 7. 11. 17. and 1 Cor. xi. 2. Phil. i. 27. chap. iii. 8. 10. and propagated in the world, 1 Theſſ. i. 7.; and therefore the knowledge of the mind of Chriſt in this prophecy is to be ſought after in the churches of the ſaints; and there, if any where, may we expect to find it. And tho' Chriſtians be much in the dark as to many things in this

this prophecy, and, becauſe of the many miſtakes that have been in the computation of the times, are much diſcouraged in their attempts to underſtand the mind of Chriſt in this book; yet it is not cloſed up and ſealed, as was the revelation of the ſame things to Daniel, Dan. xii. 9. For ſince the writing of this book, the things foretold in it have been coming to paſs, and the events explain the prophecy; and ſo, whereas it was ſaid to Daniel, that it was *cloſed and ſealed up till the time of the end*, it was ſaid to John, *Seal not the ſayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand*, chap. xxii. 10. and they are declared to be *bleſſed who read and hear this prophecy, and that keep the ſayings of the prophecy of this book, becauſe the time is at hand*, chap. i. 3. and they *muſt ſhortly be done*, and the Lord *comes quickly*, chap. xxii. 6. 7. It is true, that had the things contained in this book been clearly underſtood by Chriſtians, antichriſt had never been revealed; and though any that could perceive him and avoid him in his riſe, were bleſſed; yet till he came to his height, it was not eaſy to underſtand him as pointed out in this book. But from the beginning of his conſumption by the Spirit of the Lord's mouth, this prophecy came to be more clear; and as this conſumption goes on by degrees, ſo will this book be more and more open to the Lord's people, eſpecially when they are ſo far delivered from the Babyloniſh captivity, and antichriſtian darkneſs, as to be gathered together in churches, according to the pattern of the firſt churches, to which this book is directed: for, in the concluſion of the book, they in the churches are pointed to as the perſons that are made to know theſe things; and their Lord is ſet forth to them under the notion of the bright and morning ſtar, as giving them light and certainty of his ſudden coming the ſecond time, wherein he will be as the riſing ſun that follows the morning-ſtar.

PART I. SECT. I.

IN the beginning of this book of prophecy, according to the opinion of ſome of the learned *, we have a general and typical repreſentation of the ſtate of Chriſtianity in the world, from the beginning of Chriſt's kingdom, to his ſe-

* See Pool's Synopſis Criticorum.

cond

cond coming, in the ſeven churches of Aſia. There is no queſtion that there were ſuch churches, and ſuch things in them as the Lord obſerves in his meſſages to them. But, beſides the uſe of what is ſaid to theſe churches as they then ſtood, if we look upon this part of the book as of apiece with the reſt, we muſt find in them the things that John had ſeen, the things that were when he wrote, and the things that ſhould be hereafter. And ſo in the Epheſian church we have a repreſentation of the churches of Chriſt, and the profeſſion of his name in them, which were planted by the apoſtles; for theſe churches had to do with falſe apoſtles, and then with falſe ſcriptures, and tried them; yet ſoon decayed in that fervent charity that the apoſtle obſerves, and highly commends in his epiſtles to the Theſſalonians, which are among the firſt of his epiſtles; and this decay of love iſſued at length in the undoing of that church-order that Chriſt ſettled by his apoſtles. What our Lord ſays in the concluſion of the epiſtle to this church, and of the epiſtles to all the reſt, imports, that there is a myſtery or a parable in the epiſtle, and that it has a farther meaning than appears at firſt, or that the things ſpoken of are ſignificative of other things. For as, in the concluſion of the parables that our Lord ſpoke, he uſed to ſay, "He that "hath ears to hear, let him hear;" ſo it is ſaid here, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith "to the churches,"—the ſpirit of prophecy.

In the church in Smyrna we have a repreſentation of the ſtate and condition of the diſciples of Chriſt, in the churches under the perſecutions of the Heathen emperors, till Conſtantine's time, eſpecially the ten years perſecution of Dioclefian, "Ye ſhall have tribulation ten days;" and they were tried with blaſphemous heretics, and many that called themſelves Chriſtians, and were not.

In the church in Pergamos, under the figure of Balaam teaching the king of Moab to caſt a ſtumbling-block before Iſrael, to mingle them with the people, and lead them to falſe worſhip and idolatry, and of the Nicolaitans compared to him, we have a repreſentation of a miniſtry graſping at worldly honour and riches, conſpiring with the Roman emperor to mingle the people of Chriſt with his people in communion; which iſſued at length in defiling of the outer court of the Lord's houſe with the idolatry of the Gentiles, they being thus once brought into the outer court of his houſe. And then perſecution began, when they came to

have the ſword or ſecular power at their command. And they that withſtood the mingling of the ſeed of Iſrael with ſtrangers, which iſſued in the learning of their way, ſuffered grievouſly. And though perſecution took place at firſt under the ſpecious pretence of defending Chriſt's name againſt the Arians, yet it fell heavieſt at length on them that held the truth, according to Matth. xiii. 29.

In the epiſtle to the church in Thyatira, we may ſee the great whore repreſented by Jezebel; and the abominable doctrine and worſhip of the ſociety called the Roman church, typified by the doctrine and deeds of the Nicolaitans. The diſciples of Chriſt that lived under the full prevalency of that ſtate of things, had burden enough; and it was much if they held faſt what they had, as the ſeven thouſand hidden people in Jezebel's days, that did not bow the knee to Baal.

In the epiſtle to the church in Sardis, we have a repreſentation of the ſtate of Chriſtianity in the national churches ſeparated from the Roman church after the reformation, or after the man of ſin began to be conſumed with the Spirit of the Lord's mouth. They have a name that they live; they have received and heard; they have a few names which have not defiled their garments; and theſe are the ſufferers for the truth of the word of God, and the profeſſion thereof as far as they know it*. But though theſe ſocieties have a name to live, they are declared to be dead; and they have but a remnant of the things of Chriſtianity, which is ready to die away for the want of the reſt; and through the negligence of obſerving all the things required in the word of God, and the not doing what he requires, becauſe required by him, they ſatisfy themſelves with receiving and hearing; and if they repent not, he threatens to come upon them as a thief, in a way they would not expect.

In the epiſtle to the church in Philadelphia, we have a repreſentation of the condition of Chriſt's people under the revival of the ancient church-order inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt, and gathered together in churches after the example of the firſt churches recorded in the New Teſtament, and ſo delivered from their ſcattered condition and their bondage under Antichriſt. There ſeems to be a myſtery in the name

* H. More thinks theſe are the ſeed of which comes the church of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia,

Philadelphia, which ſignifies *brotherly-love*, and points out the revival of the ancient brotherly-love, by the decay of which the falling away from the primitive church-order took place. The titles that Chriſt takes to himſelf, carry an inſinuation of their ſtate. *He that is holy:* Their holy profeſſion, and contention for the holineſs of the Chriſtian profeſſion, however diſagreeable to the world, is agreeable to him the high prieſt of that profeſſion. *He that is true:* While they have his word alone for their rule in oppoſition to the word of man, and have all their dependence upon it, and are reckoned deceivers and deluded in following it, they have abundant ground for the courſe they take; for he is true. *He that hath the key of David, and openeth, and no man ſhutteth; and ſhutteth, and no man openeth*, points to that ſtate of things wherein it is only the key of David that opens and ſhuts the doors of God's houſe, as moſt agreeable to him, however diſagreeable it be to the wiſdom of man. They need not apply to, nor depend upon the powers of the earth for an open door to the goſpel; for they have him that hath the key of David, that opens, and no man ſhuts, and that can ſhut the doors that men open. And they are encouraged to act confidently, in immediate dependence on him, in binding and looſing, however contemptible they may be in ſo doing; for they have him that hath the key of a David. And he ſays, he has "ſet be-"fore them an open door which no man can ſhut." For, ſays he, "thou haſt a little ſtrength." They have none of that which man's wiſdom counts ſtrength, and his ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs; but they have little ſtrength in compariſon of the firſt churches, as the Jews were feeble in building the ſecond temple, and repairing the walls, and in compariſon of what they were before the captivity, and when the firſt temple was built. Yet as the reforming Jews held the written law of Moſes as the rule of their reformation, and endeavoured conformity to it in all points, and followed not the courſe of their fathers, but that law; ſo theſe keep the word of Chriſt, profeſſing entire ſubjection to his authority in the ſcriptures of truth, without adding to it, or taking from it: and however they may deny many things that men think they ſhould hold, yet they deny not the name of Chriſt as manifeſted in his word; but in keeping his word, and holding his name, they meet with contradiction and manifold temptations, to move them to let it go. And ſo his word that they keep, is the word

of his patience, for which they ſuffer with him; even as it is the word of ſalvation through his ſufferings. And thoſe that oppoſe this word, as kept by them, are they that pretend to be Chriſtians and right profeſſors of Chriſtianity; while, by their oppoſition to the word of Chriſt's patience, uſing Jewiſh weapons againſt it, and perſecuting them that hold it, it is manifeſt their pretenſions to Chriſtianity in the true profeſſion of it are falſe; and by their deſpiſing and perſecuting Chriſt's word, and them that keep it, they appear as the ſynagogue of Satan. And there are encouraging promiſes here made to Chriſt's people againſt them, and ſuitable to their condition. Further, the reviving of the ancient hope of Chriſt's coming ſeems here to be inſinuated: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that faſt which "thou haſt." For indeed it can be no worldly encouragement that moves thoſe in the condition repreſented in this epiſtle, to hold faſt his word, but the hope of the crown at his coming.

In the epiſtle to the church of the Laodiceans, we have a repreſentation of the condition of the profeſſors of Chriſt's name in the churches near the time of his ſecond coming, and when he is juſt about to appear. And therefore, as it was ſaid to Philadelphia, "Behold, I come "quickly;" ſo it is ſaid to the Laodiceans, "Behold, I "ſtand at the door and knock." And what is ſaid to the Laodiceans in the reproof the Lord gives them, agrees excellently with the parable of the ten virgins going out to meet the bridegroom, and falling aſleep before he comes, ſo that his coming is a ſurpriſe upon them, Matth. xxv. and with that ſaying of our Lord, "When the Son of Man "cometh, ſhall he find faith on the earth?" Luke xviii. 8.

It is to be obſerved, that as, in the viſions of this book, much uſe is made of the number ſeven in deſcribing the order of events, and likewiſe of angels as miniſtering to the Lamb, in his providence, and under him influencing the ſeveral events in their proper order; ſo it is in this viſion of the ſeven candleſticks. For as there are ſeven ſeals which none but the Lamb himſelf can open, and ſeven trumpets blown by ſeven angels, and ſeven vials poured out by ſeven angels; ſo there are ſeven churches, and ſeven angels; and hereby it ſeems manifeſt, that this part of the book is of the ſame kind with the reſt, and is prophecy no leſs than the other parts of it.

SECT.

SECT. II.

AFte this general introduction, containing a ſhort ſcheme of the order and different periods of things relating to the kingdom of Chriſt from the beginning to the end, all the events more particularly foretold in this book of prophecy, are contained in that book which we find in the hand of the Lamb, who alone can open it, and looſe the ſeals, chap. v. When the Lamb takes the book to open it, and looſe the ſeals, all the redeemed out of every nation are brought in as rejoicing in expectation of this, as the iſſue of his opening the ſeals, *viz.* That they ſhall reign on the earth, chap. v. 8. 9. 10. All the things revealed in this prophecy have their time and order of coming to paſs, according to the order of his opening the ſeals repreſented in the viſion. The firſt ſeal begins with the ſetting up of Chriſt's kingdom in the world by the goſpel immediately after his exaltation; and this John had ſeen, chap. vi. 12.

After the firſt ſix ſeals, chap. vi. all the reſt of the events are contained under the ſeventh which we ſee opened, chap. viii. 1. And under this ſeventh ſeal we have ſeven trumpets blown one after another by ſeven angels, ſix of them, chap. viii. and ix. and the ſeventh which brings the end, chap. xi. from ver. 15. to the end of the chapter; where we have a ſhort ſum of the things to be done by the blowing of this trumpet, to be more fully diſplayed afterward. For under this trumpet we have ſeven vials poured out one after another by ſeven angels, chap. xv. and xvi.; upon the pouring out of the laſt of which we are told, "It is done," chap. xvi. 17. So that it brings the reign of the ſaints and the times of reſtitution of all things, and fills up the wrath of God, chap. xv. 1.

Before this be, there come to paſs great revolutions one after another, all contributing one way or other to the bringing about of that which was given in expectation to the redeemed at the Lamb's taking the book, and to the preparing of them for it. And we find three different remarkable ſtates of things repreſented by three worlds ſucceeding one another, and the one ariſing through the ruin of the other; and upon the ruin of the laſt of theſe three, a fourth appears which cannot be defaced nor deſtroyed.

The

The first of these worlds is that state of things that was in being on the earth when the kingdom of Christ was first erected, and the gospel came first abroad through the earth. This world is consumed and destroyed by the first six seals; and in the ruin of it there is a type of the day of judgment, chap. vi. 12.—17. and this we may call the Jewish and Heathenish world.

The second world raised by the seals is the outward profession of Christianity in the earth; and this world is marred and defaced by the trumpets, one after another, till the seventh. See the first four trumpets, chap. viii. The fifth and sixth finish what these first four began. The defacing of this world began with the holding of the four winds, chap. vii. 1. which seems to be the restraint or with-holding of the Spirit, whereby the lively profession of Christianity was raised at the first *. And it likewise follows upon that silence of which we read, chap. viii. 1. which may be the freedom from persecution which the professors of Christianity enjoyed in the beginning of Constantine's government of the Roman empire, and before they began to employ the power of that empire in persecution. If we would rightly understand the first four trumpets, and the gradual marring of this world by them, we must consider the several notable degrees of corruption of Christianity, and of the dissolving of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms, and the several steps whereby the man of sin came to his height from the very first beginning of his being revealed.

The third world brought to its perfection by the fifth and sixth trumpets, chap. ix. is the Antichristian and Mahometan world; and is consumed and destroyed by the seven vials, under the seventh trumpet, chap. xvi.

After this world is brought to ruin, a fourth appears that cannot be destroyed. And this is the world that the saints look for, chap. xxi. 1. 2. *&c.* In the three last trumpets there are three woes, chap. viii. 13. chap. ix. 12. chap. xi. 14. The first of these woes is Antichrist and his kingdom in its perfection, set forth from the beginning of chap. ix. to ver. 12.; and the second is Mahomet, and the four powers supporting his religion: A great plague upon the superstitious and idolatrous people called Christians, chap. ix. 26. And this is described from the 12th verse of the 9th chapter to the end. These two woes are in the pre-

* Compare Ezek. xxxvii. 9. John iii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

valency

valency and high exaltation of the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom; but the third wo is upon them and in their deſtruction, whereby the kingdom of Chriſt is exalted, and the ſaints come to reign. This third wo comes by the ſeventh trumpet, which finiſhes the myſtery of God, and brings the end of time, chap. x. 6. 7. For it is the time of the coming of the kingdom of our Lord and his Chriſt, that is redeemed out of every kingdom of this world, and wherein he is to reign for ever, chap. xi. 15.; and the time of the dead that they ſhould be judged, and that the Lord ſhould reward his ſervants the prophets, and the ſaints, and them that fear his name, ſmall and great, and ſhould deſtroy them that deſtroy the earth, chap. xi. 18. And the whole wrath of God is comprehended in the ſeven laſt plagues, contained in the ſeven vials under this trumpet *. Now, the firſt ſix of theſe vials anſwer unto the firſt ſix trumpets. Antichriſt is gradually conſumed by the firſt five vials, as he aroſe gradually by the firſt five trumpets; and, as the fifth vial fills his kingdom with darkneſs, being poured on his ſeat; ſo it was by the fifth trumpet, that he was ſet on his throne, and his kingdom came with power. And as this kingdom came by the fifth trumpet, as a great ſmoke out of the pit, darkening the glory of the kingdom of Chriſt unto men; ſo the fifth vial fills it again with darkneſs. And the Mahometan powers fall by the ſixth vial, as they aroſe by the ſixth trumpet †. Yet the Antichriſtian and Mahometan world is not utterly deſtroyed by the firſt ſix vials; for, under the ſixth vial, the unclean ſpirits go out of the mouth of the beaſt and falſe prophet unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God almighty, chap. xvi. 13. 14. which is the day of the final deſtruction of the beaſt and falſe prophet, or of antichriſt, chap. xix. 19. 20. And while this preparation is making, and the ſeventh vial is ready to be poured out, warning is given of Chriſt's ſecond coming, and they are pronounced *bleſſed that watch*, chap. xvi. 15. The Lord therefore comes the ſecond time with the ſeventh vial, to deſtroy Antichriſt with the brightneſs of that coming, and to deſtroy Satan's whole kingdom, to make the ſaints reign on the earth; to judge the dead, ſmall and great, and to reſtore all things as God hath ſpoken by his

* Compare chap. viii. 9. with chap. xvi.

† Compare chap. ix. 13. 14. 15. with chap. xvi. 12.

prophets

prophets ſince the world began. For all that is ſaid to be contained under the ſeventh trumpet in the 11th chapter, that is not found in the foregoing vials, is certainly contained in this. And ſo we have a more full deſcription of what is contained in the ſeventh vial, from the 11th verſe of chap. xix. to the 6th verſe of chap. xxi. where we find the manner of Antichriſt's deſtruction by the Lord's coming, the reign of the ſaints, the judgment of the dead, and the fourth world, the new Jeruſalem, appearing, that can never be deſtroyed, becauſe there is no more curſe. And when this is declared, the ſame thing is repeated that was ſaid upon the pouring out of the ſeventh vial, *It is done* *. And this agrees with what was ſaid in chap. x. ver. 7. that by the ſounding of the ſeventh angel, or in the days of his voice, when he ſhould begin to ſound, or rather *when he ſhould ſound*, the myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed.

There are four earthquakes mentioned in the book of the Revelation; and theſe are emblems of great alterations in the ſtate of things when Heatheniſm was demoliſhed, and the Roman emperor Heathen was taken out of the way, and a Chriſtian catechumen came to be at the head of that empire.

The ſecond earthquake is chap. viii. 5. at the opening of the ſeventh ſeal. And this denotes that great change as to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity in the earth that was formerly perſecuted, and now began to be attended with earthly proſperity and grandeur; and this produced the man of ſin.

The third earthquake is at the revival of the witneſſes, and about the beginning of the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. 13. which ſeems to denote that great change in the ſtate of affairs at the reformation.

And the fourth is found in that ſum of the things that come to paſs after the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. 19. and it falls out under the ſeventh vial; compare chap. xvi. 18. 21. This earthquake is expreſsly declared to be the greateſt of all that ever were: and it is no other but that glorious revolution at the ſecond coming of Jeſus Chriſt, which is with the ſeventh vial.

The firſt three of theſe earthquakes are paſt already,

* Compare chap. vi. 17. with chap. xxi. 6.

and

and the fourth is the next to be looked for; and it ought to be more in the hopes and desires of the remnant of the woman's seed, the nearer it draws. But when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

PART II. SECT. I.

THE most part of this book of prophecy is taken up in describing the same thing that the apostle foretells in the second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, even the rise, reign, and ruin of Antichrist. There the apostle sets forth this thing under the notion of a man, even as the true church is set forth under the notion of a body, head, and members, animated by one spirit, Eph. iv. 4. 13. 15. 16. and called *one man*, Eph. ii. 15. and iv. 13. and *Christ*, 1 Cor. xii. 12. He calls Antichrist *the man of sin*, in opposition to the true catholic church, which is holy, being animated by the Holy Ghost, having Jesus Christ the holy One for its sanctifying head, and his holy Father for its father, who is above it all as the Father, through it all in his Son, and in all the members of it by his Spirit; and when it is perfected, he will be all in all the members of this body, Eph. i. 6. And as he calls this matter of Christ and the church a *great mystery*, Eph. v. 32. so he calls the matter of Antichrist, *the mystery of iniquity*.

He gives a history of this man of sin from his conception to his death. And this history begins at the time when the apostle wrote, or the beginning of the Christian church, and ends at the second coming of Christ, which is the final end of the man of sin. He describes his conception when he says, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." And it was working in the churches of the saints: for it is that falling away that he says was working, against which he directs the Thessalonians to stand fast, and hold the traditions which they had been taught. He next points at the time of his nativity, and being brought forth, and the time of his coming to be a man, when he foretells, that "he shall "be revealed then, when he that letteth is taken out of "the way." Now, that which hindered his being revealed, was the power of the Roman empire supporting Heathenish idolatry, and persecuting the churches of Christ, from out of which it behoved the man of sin to rise by means of worldly power: for his coming is with all power. He, there-

fore, that letted, till he was taken out of the way, was the Roman emperor Heathen: and when the Roman emperor came to favour the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and bring his empire under a form of Chriſtianity, and raiſe up the biſhops of the churches to worldly grandeur and riches, and mantain their authority by his power; then was the man of ſin brought forth.

But he could not come to the ſtature of a perfect man, nor ſit on his throne as the eighth head of the beaſt, till the ſeventh head of the beaſt, the Chriſtian emperor, was taken out of the way. So though he was born and nurſed up by the Chriſtian emperors, after the Heathen emperors were taken out of the way; yet he could not ſit on his throne, nor his kingdom come in power, till the Roman emperor in the weſt was taken away, and the Roman empire iſſued in the ten kingdoms or kings that receive power one hour with him, or at the ſame time with him. Now, the Roman emperors in the weſt, where the man of ſin eſpecially prevailed, were taken out of the way about 176 years after the taking away of the Heathen emperors, and then was the man of ſin enthroned. For the beginning of the reign of the man of ſin can be brought no lower, according to the apoſtle's words, compared with Rev. chap. xiii. 3. and xvii. 10. 11. 12. than the time when the emperors failed in the weſt, and the Roman empire iſſued in the ten kingdoms.

The apoſtle deſcribes his coming, that it will be after the working of Satan, and his influence upon the minds of men; and that it will be with *all power*, not only the powers of darkneſs and ſpiritual wickedneſſes, but ſecular power acting tyrannically in matters of religion; and that it will be with pretended miracles, ſigns, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs; and that it will be a ſtrong deluſion ſent by God as a righteous judgment on men profeſſing Chriſtianity, and not receiving the love of the truth, nor believing it, ſo as to be ready to part with their all in the world for it; and it ruins ſuch eternally: but it cannot deſtroy them that receive the love of the truth, being choſen to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

By all which it is manifeſt, that the man of ſin has not merely ſecular power to influence men, but is a power acting upon the minds and conſciences of men going under the Chriſtian name. For the apoſtle ſays, he ſits in the temple of God, the outer court of the Lord's houſe, that is trodden

trodden under foot of the Gentiles the whole time of his reign, Rev. xi. 2. And there he oppoſes his power to God, ſhews himſelf that he is God, uſurping the authority that belongs to God over his houſe, and as God ſits in the temple of God. And he exalts himſelf above all that is called God, and worſhipped. He ſhall not only have the dominion over the powers of the earth, but rather, he ſhall be the ruler of the worſhip of falſe gods or idols, and ſhall exalt himſelf above every object that he calls men to worſhip: and all that is worſhipped under his dominion, ſhall be treated by him only as his ſervant to exalt himſelf.

Then the apoſtle repreſents this man of ſin as falling into a conſumption, and then periſhing quite. He that brings him down and deſtroys him, is the Lord Chriſt, who will firſt conſume him, waſting him by degrees, as he roſe by degrees, diſſolving and weakening the ſtrength of his body ſtep by ſtep. And this he will do by "the ſpirit of his mouth," by the goſpel of his kingdom, the word of truth, accompanied with the power of his Spirit upon the minds of men, in oppoſition to the man of ſin's deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, and all his power. For it is only this ſpirit of the Lord's mouth that can deliver men from the influence of ſtrong deluſion, and weaken the power of Antichriſt, as he ſits in the temple of God, and rules there as God: though, no doubt, his providence will work effectually to order outward circumſtances in a ſubſerviency to this inſtrument of the man of ſin's conſumption, the ſpirit of his mouth.

Then the apoſtle ſays, he will next deſtroy him; and this is to be by "the brightneſs of his coming;" which is not a bright coming in the preached goſpel, for that is the ſpirit of his mouth; and this expreſſion is too high to be underſtood of his acting againſt Antichriſt by means of the powers of the earth. Wherefore it is more agreeable to explain this by the context, where the apoſtle is ſpeaking of Chriſt's ſecond coming, and declaring that the day of his coming ſhall not be till Antichriſt be revealed; and when he has firſt conſumed him, he then declares he ſhall be deſtroyed by the brightneſs of that coming.

The apoſtle likewiſe gives the characters of Antichriſt in the 4th chapter of 1ſt Timothy from the beginning; where he ſtates this myſtery of iniquity in oppoſition to the myſtery of godlineſs, of which he had been ſpeaking immediately before: for as the one is the ſenſe of the dark prophecies and figures of the Old Teſtament, ſo is the other,

and so both of them are mystery. The one is the mystery of faith held in a pure conscience in the true church of the living God. The other is the mystery of departing from that faith under some kind of profession of it, and giving heed to seducing spirits. And this is the same thing with the working of Satan, the deceivableness of unrighteousness, and the strong delusion sent on them that they should believe a lie, who received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, of which the apostle speaks to the Thessalonians.

He makes the doctrines of demons a character of this falling and departure from the faith. And this is manifest in the divine honour paid to departed saints, and in the worship of angels and souls of departed saints, in the Roman church, where they are used as the heathens used their demons. This worship of demons was introduced and established by fables and lies, and the whole apostasy of the latter times is attended and upheld with lies in hypocrisy.

He next makes forbidding to marry, a character of this apostasy from the faith. And this is manifest in the Roman church, where marriage is made so unclean that it is not lawful for their priests, and where they forbid marriage far beyond the degrees of kindred and affinity wherein God's word forbids to marry.

Then he mentions abstinence from meats, and from the use of some creatures that God hath made to be eaten. And this is manifest in the abstinence of the Roman church from flesh on certain days and at certain seasons; while yet they allow the use of blood to Christians, which God forbade when he allowed to eat freely of every creature, Gen. ix. 4. Acts xv. 29.

We have another description of the Antichristian teachers and people in the 4th chapter of the second Epistle to Timothy, ver. 3. and 4. and in the 3d chapter from the beginning. In opposition to whom, the apostle commends the scriptures, and the doctrine of the necessary connection betwixt Christianity and the cross. For by departing from the doctrine of the cross, and endeavouring to set up a worldly kingdom to Christ, Antichrist came. The spirit of Antichrist speaks of the world, and the world hears it, that will not hear the pure word of the apostles of Jesus Christ, 1 John chap. iv.

SECT.

SECT. II.

THE description that the Revelation gives of the rise, reign, and ruin of antichrist, is an explication of Daniel's prophecy on that subject. And there seems to be a reference to the sealing of the prophecy till the time of the end, spoken of in Daniel, chap. xii. 9. in the opening of the sealed book by the Lamb, Rev. chap. v. The time, times, and an half, Rev. xii. 14. is the same thing that we have, Dan. vii. 25. and xii. 7. And when the apostle says the Lord will consume the man of sin with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming, he is plainly explaining and applying these words in Daniel, chap. vii. 26. "But the judgment shall sit, and they "shall take away his dominion, to consume, and destroy it "unto the end." And we may also observe a plain reference in verse 4. of chap. ii. of the 2d epistle to the Thessalonians, unto Dan. xi. 36. as there is also a plain reference to the treading under foot the sanctuary, Dan. viii. 13. and polluting the sanctuary, chap. xi. 31. in what is said, Rev. chap. xi. 2. of the giving the outer court of the temple to the Gentiles, and their treading under foot the holy city.

It is manifest, that Daniel prophesieth of the Roman empire, the fourth kingdom after that of Nebuchadnezzar, which was the first, and foretells the breaking down of that kingdom into ten kingdoms, under the notion of the feet and toes of the image, which are ten, and represents the kingdom of Christ as falling upon these ten kingdoms, smiting the image upon his feet; and so putting an end to all worldly kingdoms, chap. ii. from ver. 31. to ver. 45. And the same empire is foreshewed by the emblem of the fourth beast with ten horns, chap. vii.; and antichrist is foreshewed by the little horn. For this is the explication of the vision of the fourth beast, and of the little horn, ver. 23. "Thus "he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom up- "on the earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, "and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, "and break it in pieces." Ver. 24. "And the ten horns out "of this kingdom, are ten kings that shall arise: and ano- "ther shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse from "the first, and he shall subdue three kings." Ver. 25. "And "he

" he ſhall ſpeak words againſt the Moſt High*, and " ſhall wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and think to " change times and laws: and they ſhall be given into his " hand, until a time, times, and the dividing of time." Ver. 26. " But the judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take " away his dominion, to conſume, and to deſtroy it unto " the end." Ver. 27. " And the kingdom, and dominion, " and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole hea- " ven, ſhall be given to the people of the ſaints of the Moſt " High, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and all " dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him." Ver. 28. " Hither- " to is the end of the matter." It is eaſy to perceive the reference that is in the book of the Revelation to this prophecy, and that it is the ſame thing that is ſpoken of in both.

Daniel here ſpeaks directly of the Roman empire, and of Antichriſt as a little horn growing out of it. But in the 8th and 11th chapters, Antichriſt is ſet forth under the figure and type of Antiochus Epiphanes, who is called the little horn, growing out of one of the four horns of the beaſt repreſenting the Grecian empire, chap. viii. from ver. 8. to ver. 14. See the explication of the viſion, from ver. 20. to ver. 26. whereby it is manifeſt, that Daniel ſpeaks of the third monarchy, the Grecian, and of Antiochus, that took away the daily ſacrifice, and profaned the temple in Jeruſalem, and ſet up an idol in it. But under the figure of the miſchief he did to the Jews, the evils that have come by Antichriſt are pointed at. For when Daniel is commanded to ſhut up the viſion, becauſe it was for many days, ver. 26. it is plainly enough inſinuated, that it ſpeaks of a thing much farther off than Antiochus; eſpecially if we compare chap. xii. ver. 9. The ſame thing is more largly deſcribed, chap. xi. where there is a large deſcription of Antiochus Epiphanes, from the 21ſt verſe downward, and of Antichriſt as typified by him; as is manifeſt from the continuation of the ſtory of him, unto the day of judgment, and the end of the world, (compare chap. xii. ver. 1. and downward), and from the application of the characters of Antiochus to Antichriſt, by the apoſtle, as was before noticed; and from the application of the three years and an half to him, chap. xii. ver. 7. with chap. vii. 25. which were aſcribed to the little horn of the fourth beaſt, or to Antichriſt growing out of the Roman empire.

* Ex parte Altiſſimi. *Arias.*

And

And here we muſt take care to diſtinguiſh the abomination that maketh deſolate, ſpoken of in chap. xi. ver. 31. and chap. viii. ver. 13. from that which is ſpoken of, chap. ix. ver. 27. where the deſtruction of the temple of Jeruſalem by the Romans, and the final end of the ſacrifices there, are foretold; to which laſt our Lord eſpecially refers, when he foretells the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, while yet he makes the one a figure of the other. All that Antiochus did to the temple at Jeruſalem, is made uſe of in the prophecy, to typify what has been done by Antichriſt. And the time of the taking away of the daily ſacrifice, and of the profanation of the temple by Antiochus, is a figure of the time of the treading of the outer court of the Lord's houſe under the feet of the Gentiles by Antichriſt; every day of the profanation by Antiochus ſignifying a year of the profanation by Antichriſt, Ezek. iv. 6. So, in the opinion of ſome, the daily ſacrifice ceaſed by Antiochus 2300 evenings and mornings, *i. e.* 1150 days, chap. viii. 13. 14. From the profanation of the temple to its cleanſing, were three years and a half, or 1260 days. And the time that was taken up in cleanſing it, may have lengthened out theſe days to 1290, Dan. xii. 11. And the time from thence to its dedication with great ſolemnity, might have been 45 days; which, being added to the former, makes 1335, which is the utmoſt of Daniel's numbers.

In the book of the Revelation, the ſecond of theſe numbers only is much inſiſted on, and applied to Antichriſt, *viz.* the time, times, and an half, Rev. xii. 14. or 42 months, xi. 2. and xiii. 5. or 1260 days, xi. 3. There are ſeveral characters of Antichriſt in the book of Daniel, in chap. vii. where he is directly ſpoken of. It is ſaid, he ſhall wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and think to change times and laws.

In chap. viii. where he is typified by Antiochus, it is ſaid, that he is a king of fierce countenance, and underſtanding dark ſentences; and that his power ſhall be mighty, but not by his own power, (compare Rev. xvii. 12. 13.), and that he ſhall deſtroy wonderfully, or corrupt the marvellous things, and proſper, and practiſe, and deſtroy and corrupt the mighty, and the holy people; that he ſhall magnify himſelf in his heart, and ſtand up againſt the prince of princes, or inſtead of the prince of princes, or upon the prince of princes, making him, as it were, a ſtepping-ſtone, to raiſe himſelf; and that, through his policy, he

he ſhall cauſe craft to proſper in his hand, and by peace deſtroy many. He ſhall deſtroy both by force and fraud, war and peace. If he uſe open violence, it is to corrupt and deſtroy. If he be at peace, the end thereof is to corrupt and deſtroy the holy people, ver. 23. 24. 25.

His deceit and his violence both are alſo largely repreſented, chap. xi. For there, we ſee, he obtains the kingdom by flatteries, works deceitfully, corrupts by flatteries, *&c.* And then it is ſaid, "Arms ſhall ſtand on his part; and they that "underſtand among the people, and inſtruct many, ſhall fall "by the ſword, and by the flame, by captivity, and by ſpoil "many days." He is there likewiſe repreſented as having the command of worldly wealth and riches: "He ſhall "ſcatter among them the prey, and ſpoil, and riches. "And a god whom his father knew not, ſhall he honour "with gold, and ſilver, and precious ſtones, and pleaſant "things. Thus ſhall he do in the moſt ſtrong holds with "a ſtrange god, whom he ſhall acknowledge and increaſe "with glory: and he ſhall cauſe them to rule over many, "and ſhall divide the land for gain." The diviſion of the land for gain, looks very like the riſe of pariſhes, and the uſe made of them. His pride and lordly dominion is alſo ſet forth, ver. 36. 37. and his idolatry, 38. 39. and his contempt of marriage, 37. But that which is mainly inſiſted on, is his taking away the daily ſacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh deſolate, chap. viii. 13. and xi. 31. and ſcattering the power of the holy people, chap. xii. 7.

SECT. III.

THE ſame thing is repreſented more fully, and under ſeveral figures, in the book of the Revelation, where we have ſeveral deſcriptions of antichriſt. The firſt is in chap. ix. from the beginning to ver. 12. By comparing ver. 4. with chap. vii. 1. 2. 3. 4. we may ſee, that the holding of the four winds made way for the coming of this great evil; and that this is that evil againſt which God made proviſion for the ſafety of his ſervants in ſealing them, that they might not be eternally ruined thereby, while others are left unto it. And if we conſider how the firſt ſix vials anſwered to the firſt ſix trumpets, as has been already obſerved, and compare the 2d verſe of this 9th chap. with chap. xvi.

xvi. ver. 10. we may ſee, that it is the kingdom of the beaſt that is deſcribed here, even the beaſt with the ten horns, chap. xvii. the beaſt that aſcended out of the bottomleſs pit, chap. xi. 7. the beaſt to whom the dragon gave power, chap. xiii. 2. 4. compare chap. ix. ver. 7. 2. 11.

As the figures in the book of the Revelation are borrowed from the Old Teſtament, ſo this of crowned locuſts ſeems to be taken from the prophet Nahum, who, ſpeaking of the kings of Aſſyria and Nineveh, chap. iii. 17. ſays, *Thy crowned are as the locuſts.* For there are types of Antichriſt in the Old Teſtament, as well as of Chriſt. In the ruin of Nineveh, and of the Aſſyrian king, foretold by Nahum, the ruin of Antichriſt is typified. The deſolation that is brought upon the Chriſtian profeſſion by Antichriſt, is repreſented by the deſolation that is made by the locuſts on the face of the earth; and ſeveral of the expreſſions here ſeem to be borrowed from the prophet Joel, ſpeaking of the deſtruction of the fruits of the land, by the locuſts, among other ſuch deſtroying creatures, Joel chap. i. ver. 4. "That which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locuſt eaten." Ver. 6. "For a nation is come up upon my "land, ſtrong and without number, whoſe teeth are the "teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great "lion." Compare ver. 8. And chap. ii. ver. 2. "A day of "darkneſs and of gloominеſs, a day of clouds and of "thick darkneſs." Ver. 10. "The ſun and the moon ſhall "be dark." Compare ver. 2. 3. Ver. 4. 5. "The appear-"ance of them is as the appearance of horſes, and as horſe-"men, ſo ſhall they run. Like the noiſe of chariots on the "tops of mountains ſhall they leap, like the noiſe of a flame "of fire that devoureth the ſtubble, as a ſtrong people ſet "in battle-array." Compare ver. 7. 9. Ver. 6. "Before "their face the people ſhall be much pained: all faces "ſhall gather blackneſs." Ver. 11. "For the day of the "Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?" Compare ver. 6.

The kingdom of Antichriſt, from its firſt erection, made ſuch a deſolation upon the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, as the locuſts made on the face of the earth. And as the Roman empire was waſted by the nations that ſwarmed upon it about the beginning of Antichriſt's reign, and when the ten kings received power one hour in it with the beaſt; ſo the outward profeſſion of Chriſtianity was waſted by the reign of Antichriſt. Now, this cannot be better repreſented, than

in the words of the prophet Joel, chap. i. from ver. 6. "For a nation is come up upon my land, ſtrong and without number, whoſe teeth are as the teeth of a lion.—— "He hath laid my vine waſte, and barked my fig-tree; he "hath made it clean bare, and caſt it way: the branches "thereof are made white. The meat-offering and the drink-"offering is cut off from the houſe of the Lord the "prieſts the Lord's miniſters mourn. The field is wafted, "the land mourneth," &c.

This kingdom of Antichriſt is deſigned only unto the hurt of thoſe profeſſors of Chriſtianity that received not the love of the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs; and it cannot ruin them that are choſen unto ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. For the locuſts are commanded "not to hurt the graſs of the earth, "neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only thoſe "men that have not the ſeal of God in their foreheads." So the true ſubjects of this kingdom, on whom it puts forth its whole power, are thoſe that have a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it. And it does not utterly extinguiſh all the form of the Chriſtian profeſſion in them; but, by means of what remains of it, torments them, keeping them, as it were, betwixt death and life, in ſuch pain as one has that is ſtinged by a ſcorpion, ver. 5. 6.

This kingdom is a kingdom of darkneſs, and the power of it is the power of deluſion, and the effectual working of Satan, ver. 1. 2. 3. This power acting upon the conſciences of men, together with the ſecular power wherewith it is accompanied, is that which torments the ſubjects of the Antichriſtian kingdom. The power of this kingdom is repreſented by ſeveral ſeemingly inconſiſtent things; ſo that it appears as a monſter with ſeveral heterogeneous properties; locuſts having power as ſcorpions, and ſhaped like horſes prepared unto battle, with crowns like gold; faces like men; hair as the hair of women; teeth like the teeth of lions; breaſt-plates of iron; the ſound of their wings as the ſound of chariots of many horſes ruſhing to battle; and tails like ſcorpions, with ſtings. Here is a compoſition of things terrifying and alluring, of deceit and violence, deluſion and perſecuting worldly power, hardineſs and ſoftneſs, beauty and honour, deformity and baſeneſs. Such is the kingdom of Antichriſt that torments its true ſubjects, and hurts them as a ſcorpion when he ſtriketh a man; and ſo holds them in unavoidable ſubjection. This torment, the

effect

effect of the Antichriſtian power upon the minds of men, was the ſpring of all the riches wherewith the Roman church is enriched, and of all the pilgrimages, penances, and monaſteries of that church; and this ſuperſtitious fear of the Antichriſtian power keeps men in ſubjection to it every where, as far as it any way prevails, and makes them ſerve and live in obedience to it.

This kingdom of the locuſts with crowns, muſt have its courſe, its ſeaſon, repreſented by the time of the longeſt continuance of the locuſts, when they come, which is five months. In the former four trumpets, we have a repreſentation of ſeveral things whereby the Roman emperor was taken out of the way, and the ſeveral things that made way for Antichriſt's coming to the throne: but here we have a repreſentation of his kingdom.

SECT. IV.

WE have the next deſcription of Antichriſt in the 11th chapter, where, by the references to Moſes and Aaron, Elijah and Eliſha, Zorobabel and Joſhua, and to our Lord's miniſtry on earth, in the deſcription of the witneſſes, we may ſee that this evil was typified by the Egyptian bondage *, by the apoſtaſy of the ten tribes, and particularly in the time of Jezebel, ver. 6. by the Babyloniſh captivity, ver. 4. and by the Jews in the days of our Lord's miniſtry, and their joining with the Roman governor to crucify him, ver. 8. It is alſo pointed out as the antitype of filthy Sodom, where Lot's righteous ſoul was vexed with the filthy converſation of the wicked, and which was deſtroyed with fire and brimſtone after he was brought out of it, ver. 8. And in the killing of the witneſſes, Antichriſt is repreſented in his tyrannical perſecuting power, as a beaſt that aſcended out of the bottomleſs pit. But this is more fully ſet forth in the 13th and 17th chapters. That which is eſpecially to be conſidered here, is, the treading of the outer-court of the temple of God under the feet of the Gentiles. And we may obſerve, that, in the meaſuring of the temple, there is a reference to the meaſure ſpoken of by Ezekiel; but in this meaſuring the reed is in the hand of John, and he is called to

* Compare ver. 6. and 8.

measure only the inner temple, and the altar, and them that worship therein, or the holy catholic church, and them that worship in spirit and in truth, drawing near to God in the heavenly sanctuary, through the vail of Christ's flesh. This could not be profaned by Antichrist; and he is forbidden to measure the outer-court and the holy city, as not answering to the word of the apostles, and not being any way capable to undergo the trial of God's word, the only rule for measuring the temple. And by this court of the temple without the temple, we are to understand the outward profession of Christianity in the world; and so this is an evil that sprang up under the outward profession of Christianity, and of the worship and service of Jesus Christ; according to what Paul says to the Thessalonians, of the mystery of iniquity already working in the churches of the saints. It is likewise manifest, that this evil must go under the name and outward shew of Christianity; for it is in the court of the temple and holy city, according to what the apostle says of the man of sin, his sitting in the temple of God. But this outward shew and profession of Christianity is such as cannot be measured by the rule of God's word; yea, it is such a profanation of the Christian profession as that profanation of the Jewish temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, which was such, as the Jews that adhered to the law of God, could not worship in it till it was cleansed. For there is a plain reference here unto what is said by the prophet Daniel, of that profanation as a type of this. By the treading of the outer-court of the temple, and the holy city, under the feet of the Gentiles or nations, we are to understand,

1. The coming in of the nations under the Christian name, and into the communion of the Christian worship, without that influence of the gospel upon them that made men professors of Christianity before; but under the influence of such motives as influence worldly men. And though they were in name Christians, yet they remained truly Heathens, so answered not to the rule of the Christian profession laid down in the New Testament. Now, these are whole nations going under the Christian name, and having a form of Christian worship, a form of godliness, while they visibly deny the power of it, 2 Tim. iii. 5. These are the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, the many waters on which the whore sitteth *. This had

* Compare ver. 9. with chap. xvii. 15.

its

its beginning from the time of the taking away of the Roman emperor Heathen, in the days of Conſtantine the Great; and it was working before remarkably about the beginning of the third century, when Tertullian wrote of the multitude of Chriſtians in the empire, and about the time of the ſeparation of the Novatians; and the oppoſition to them made way for it. But this came to perfection when the empire was broken into ten kingdoms, and the Roman emperor was taken out of the way, and theſe kingdoms took on the Chriſtian name, which is the time when Antichriſt began to reign as the eighth head of the beaſt.

2. This treading of the outer-court under the feet of the Gentiles or nations, imports the ſubjecting of that court unto an eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, managed by church-rulers after the manner of the juriſdiction of the lords of the Gentiles; and the bringing in of the power of theſe nations going under the Chriſtian name, and their kings into that outer-court, *i. e.* the magiſtrate's power *in ſacris et circa ſacra.* This was working in the firſt part of it in the churches of the ſaints in the days of the apoſtles, and more after their removal in the affair of one biſhop in every church, and after that in the matter of ſynods and councils; but it came not to its height while the power of councils was not attended with ſecular power. As to the other part of it, it could not be before the Roman emperor Heathen was taken out of the way in the days of Conſtantine. Yet the diſpoſition of churchmen toward this beforehand appeared, in their application even to the Heathen emperor Aurelian, and the aſſiſtance he gave them againſt the heretic Paulus Samoſatenus; for here it appeared they were pregnant with this conception of iniquity before it was brought forth. But in the days of Conſtantine it had its nativity, and was nurſed up in the days of the Chriſtian emperors, till it came to the ſtature of a perfect man, when the empire was broken into ten kingdoms, and theſe gave their power to the beaſt: for then the power of the holy people was utterly ſcattered by a pretended eccleſiaſtical power, and ſecular power joined with it in ruling the outer-court of the temple of God. And as the holy people were ſcattered by the mingling of the Gentiles with them in the communion of the viſible Chriſtian worſhip; ſo their power was ſcattered by this foreign power brought in upon their inheritance.

See

See Ezek. chap. xxxiv. 17.—23. Dan. vii. 25. and xii. 7.

3. This treading under foot of the outer-court and the holy city by the Gentiles, imports the bringing of the Gentile superstition and idolatry into that court, and the profanation of the Christian worship thereby. There were many superstitious practices in the church before Constantine: but after the Roman emperor Heathen was taken out of the way, the disposition towards superstition got vent, and the simplicity of the gospel-worship, according to the rule of the gospel, was no more regarded; and religious honour or worship was paid to martyrs. And when the Gentiles began to enter into the outer-court, they brought their superstition with them; only it now ran in another channel; and the Christian worship began to be adorned with worldly pomp and grandeur, more desirable to the Gentiles than the true glory of that worship which they could not perceive. But when Antichrist came to his throne, and the ten kings gave their power to the beast, as his kingdom grew, superstition and abominable idolatry grew with it, and Jesus Christ was honoured in pretence with gold, and silver, and precious things; till at length all the abominable superstition and idolatry of the Gentiles came under the name of the Christian worship; and thus the outer-court of the Lord's house was trodden under the feet of the Gentiles.

SECT. V.

HEre we may take notice of the time allotted unto this evil, which is here said to be forty-two months. This is the time of the beast's making war after the healing of his deadly wound, chap. xiii. ver. 3. 4. 5. and the time of the woman's flying into the wilderness, and being nourished there, chap. xii. ver. 14. a time, times, and an half, or three years and an half, which is that spoken of by Daniel, chap. vii. and xii. And this is also the same number with the 1260 days, wherein the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, or in the garments of their captivity. Much has been said of these 1260 days wherein the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, taking each day for a year, Ezek. iv. 6.; and it has been thought that this is the time that must run from the rise to the final ruin of antichrist; and in that case, the end of these

1260

1260 years muſt be the time of the Lord's ſecond coming. For it ſeems pretty clear, from 2 Theſſ. ii. that Antichriſt's utter deſtruction will not be till he come. But Daniel has thirty and forty-five days after the 1260 days; therefore we muſt either give over the inquiry about the beginning of theſe forty-two months, or 1260 years, or elſe expect the end of them before the coming of Chriſt, and the final ruin of Antichriſt. And if they end before that, it muſt be either at the beginning of the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, and when the vials that conſume the man of ſin begin to be poured out, or elſe at the time of the fifth vial, which is poured out on the ſeat of the beaſt, and fills his kingdom with darkneſs.

There have been ſeveral conjectures about the beginning of theſe 1260 prophetical days or years; but, if the ſcriptures do not fix the beginning of theſe years to us, all our opinions about it, however feaſible they may ſeem to us, according to our notions of Antichriſt, muſt be but vain gueſſes. If the following texts do not point out to us the beginning of theſe years, I ſee not how it can with any certainty be found out in the ſcriptures. 2 Theſſ. ii. 6. "And now ye know what with-holdeth that he might "be revealed in his time." Ver. 7. "For the myſtery of "iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, "will let, until he be taken out of the way." Ver. 8. "And "then ſhall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord "ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and deſtroy "with the brightneſs of his coming." Rev. xiii. 3. "And I ſaw one of his heads (the beaſt's heads), as it were "wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: "and all the world wondered after the beaſt." Ver. 5. And "there was given unto him a mouth ſpeaking great things, "and blaſphemies; and power was given to him to con-"tinue (or to make war) forty-two months." Rev. xvii. 9. "And here is the mind which hath wiſdom. The "ſeven heads are ſeven mountains, on which the woman "ſitteth." Ver. 10. "And there are ſeven kings," (ſeven forms of ſupreme government in the city or commonwealth of Rome): "five are fallen," (1. kings, 2. conſuls, 3. decemvirs, 4. tribunes of the ſoldiers, 5. dictators; theſe were no more ruling with ſovereign power, or were no more the ſupreme government in the Roman commonwealth, as they all had been at times before the Revelation was written); "and one is," (*viz.* emperors Heathen; this

head

head was when the Revelation was written, and is the ſixth head), " and the other is not yet come," (the emperors profeſſing Chriſtianity, and drawing a form of Chriſtian religion over the empire; by whom the ſtate of it was mightily changed and altered; ſo that they may well be called another head to it: and what elſe can the ſeventh head be but theſe emperors?); " and when he cometh, he " muſt continue a ſhort ſpace." This laſt head of the ancient Roman commonwealth did not laſt two ages by far: for the beaſt was wounded to death in the ſeventh head, when Auguſtulus was depoſed, and Odoacer reigned in Italy, in the year of the common computation from the birth of our Lord 476. And though one reigned in Conſtantinople with the title of emperor till the year 1453, when Conſtantinople was taken by the Turks; yet, from the forementioned period 476, he could not be eſteemed the head of the Roman commonwealth, but one of the ten kings, and his kingdom but a tenth part of the city. Neither did any of the kings that ruled from thenceforth in Italy, or in the weſtern part of the Roman empire, wear the title of emperors till Charles the Great; and he received his crown and title from the biſhop of Rome, and gave his power to him as remarkably as any of the ten kings. So that, after the year 476, the Roman empire being already divided into ten kingdoms, and wounded to death in its ſeventh head, remained united in nothing but the worldly profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and had no government to which it ſubmitted, but the pretended eccleſiaſtic government of biſhops and their councils, among whom the biſhop of Rome had the precedency. And though there were manifold quarrels and diviſions among them, as there had been in the ancient Roman commonwealth before, yet they were one eccleſiaſtically ſecular empire ſtill.

" And the beaſt that was, and is not, even he is the eighth," (even this of which I have been juſt now ſpeaking, " the beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is," ver. 8. the Roman empire that was before this, and is not, being wounded to death in the ſeventh head, and broken into ten kingdoms, and yet is, or ſtill remains exiſting in that one catholic viſible church, whereof the Roman church and its biſhop, or a catholic council of biſhops, no matter which, is the head, and to which the ten kings gave their power), " and is of the ſeven," (was nurſed up by the ſeventh head, and is indeed all the ſeven over again, under

der another name); "and goeth into perdition;" *(for the Lord ſhall conſume him with the ſpirit of his mouth, and deſtroy him with the brightneſs of his coming).* Ver. 12. "And "the ten horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings, which "have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as "kings one hour" (or about the ſame time) "with the "beaſt," even the beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is.

Theſe are the texts, if there be any, from which we muſt learn the beginning of the forty-two months. And from them we may learn, that the beginning of them could not be before the ſixth head of the beaſt fell, and was taken out of the way, which was about the year of our Lord 325. If then we reckon, that the man of ſin was then revealed, and that the 1260 years begin there, then they ended about the end of the ſixteenth century; when the matter of the national reformation was come to its height, and to a full ſettlement and a ſtand. And ſo from the time of his nativity, to the time of his falling into a conſumption, or from the time of the firſt trumpet to the time of the firſt vial, we have the forty-two months, or 1260 prophetical days or years.

But the foreſaid texts ſeem rather to point to the time when the beaſt was wounded to death in the ſeventh head, which continued a ſhort ſpace after the ſixth fell; or when the Roman empire being broken into ten kingdoms, yet remained united in that form of Chriſtianity, and in that catholic eccleſiaſtic government that took its riſe under the Chriſtian emperors; and, when they were taken out of the way, was ſupported and maintained by the power of the ten kings. And this, at furtheſt, was the time when the empire in the weſt ended in Auguſtulus in the year 476.

Hereabout then muſt be the beginning of Antichriſt's reign, if it be to be found out by the ſcripture: and ſo the forty-two months or 1260 days, is the time that runs from thence unto the time of the vial that is poured out on the ſeat of the beaſt, and fills his kingdom with darkneſs; which, according to this reckoning, cannot be far off. For, from the year 476 to the year 1736, are 1260 years. And it will not be eaſy, according to the forecited texts, to fix the beginning of the 1260 days later than the 476th year of our Lord.

If we admit not the explication before hinted of the time ſpoken of by *Palmoni*, or the wonderful numberer in Daniel's viſion, chap. viii. 13. 14. but chuſe rather to un-

derſtand 2300 prophetical days or years that begin when Daniel had that viſion, and end at the cleanſing of the outer-court of the Lord's houſe, from the profanation of it by the Gentiles; then, ſuppoſing, according to the common computation, that Daniel had that viſion 553 years before Chriſt's nativity, theſe 2300 years end within this century, and this makes the time wherein we live to be the time of the cleanſing of the ſanctuary.

But when we conſider, that the three years and an half are the ſame thing with forty-two months, and theſe the ſame with 1260 days, we find that theſe prophetical years are made up of months conſiſting preciſely of thirty days, and ſo cannot anſwer exactly to our years. So that till the preciſe year of Daniel's viſion, and of Chriſt's nativity, and of the beginning of Antichriſt's reign can be condeſcended on, and the difference betwixt the prophetical years and ours be adjuſted, (1260 of our years are about eighteen years more than 1260 prophetical years), no particular year can be condeſcended on; yea, and the nature of the thing perhaps may be found not to admit of ſuch a particular condeſcenſion. For the filling of the Antichriſtian kingdom with darkneſs, is a work of Providence upon the minds of men, and of the ſpirit of the Lord's mouth upon the conſciences of them that are ſubject to the word of God; and this is a work that is done with leſs obſervation, and takes up more time, than the fighting of a battle or deſtroying of a city.

If Antichriſt came to his throne in the fifth century, when the Roman empire was wounded to death in the ſeventh head, and broken into ten kingdoms, and yet remained united in the catholic eccleſiaſtic body, ſupported by the power of the ten kings; then his kingdom muſt be filled with darkneſs in the eighteenth century, which is now running: and if we find not the end of the 1260 prophetical days in this age, it will be hard to ſhew that the ſcripture tells us where to find it, or at what time to expect it.

Now, though the Lord began to conſume the man of ſin, and break the ſtrength of the great city, by the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel, and beginning that diviſion of the city into three parts or three communions, *i. e.* the Popiſh, Lutheran, Zuinglian or Calviniſt, which diviſion is to continue till the utter deſtruction of the whole city by the ſeventh vial, Rev. xvi. 19. yet the kingdom of the beaſt (which is the dominion of the clergy over the conſciences of the men of the nations

tions or kingdoms, whose power is given to them to keep the nations in subjection to them) was not much touched till this age. For even the nations that are in the Calvinist communion have been as much under the dominion of the national clergy, as the nations in the other communions have been under the dominion of their clergy; and they have had the power of the kingdoms, where they are keeping men in subjection to their authority, even as the other. And though the gospel has been more purely preached in these nations, and more of the Lord's people have been thereby in that part of the city; yet the main body of the nations in that communion, were still the Gentiles treading under foot the outer-court of the Lord's house; and the clergy ruled over the superstitious people as the lords of the Gentiles, and with the power of the lords of the Gentiles.

But now, in this age, the world (which is the world still, whether its course be in the channel of superstition or infidelity) seems to be taking a remarkable turn towards infidelity, such as never was before, since Antichrist came to his throne, and since the outer-court was given to the nations, τοις εθνεσι, to be trodden under foot of them forty-two months. This weakens the kingdom of the beast far more effectually, than if, by the armies of the ten kings, the Pope, and the place where he dwells, and the society of the Jesuits, were destroyed, in order to establish any one national uniformity and clergy in his stead. Now, this bias that the world is under at present, is very grievous to the clergy, so that they are gnawing their tongues for pain at it; and likewise at this, that they cannot have the concurrence of the secular power as formerly, to establish their uniformity and to persecute; which is another evidence of the falling of the Antichristian kingdom. Yet it is manifest, from their whole way that are vexed with this, that they repent not of their deeds. And from what they yet profess, and have power to do, it is very plain, that they would lord over mens consciences, and persecute with the power of the kings of the nations, as much as ever they did, if they had but opportunity: but, in stead of that, they are losing ground every day, and this torments them.

Further, as the Lord has been by his word manifesting other national churches that are divided from the Roman church to be Antichristian; so, at this day, he is by his word bringing home the same charge on this national church, which of all others has been esteemed the purest, and has

long boasted in its freedom from every thing Antichristian, while it has been charging other national churches with Antichristianism. And now their national covenants, and the constitution of their church, wherein they have gloried much in opposition to Antichrist and Babylon, appear, by the word, to be no more but a human invention, and an engine for mingling Christ's people and the world, or treading the outer-court under the feet of the nation, and for persecution, and establishing the dominion of the clergy over the nation; that, by the assistance of the secular power, they might rule like the lords of the Gentiles over all the people of a nation, having a form of godliness, and yet for the most part openly denying the power of it.

From such the Lord is now by his word persuading his people to turn away, and to separate themselves from the people of the nation, unto his law, to do what is found written therein, as the returning captives from typical Babylon did with respect to the law of Moses. And though they be but a weak and a feeble people, yet they have the word of the Lord of hosts, and his spirit remaining among them, to consume the man of sin, and to repair the desolations of many generations. In this matter, the Lord is proceeding in his usual way, to stain the pride of man's glory, that he alone may be exalted; and answering the prayers of his own people in the nation by terrible things in righteousness, and not in the way they were expecting. For when they were praying for the bringing down of the Antichristian kingdom, they thought it would be by the sacking of Rome, the destruction of the Pope, and the exaltation of their national church, and its order, as the Jews looked for the exaltation of their nation by the coming of the Messiah; but in stead of that, he is, by his word, manifesting, that the very constitution and frame of their church is Antichristian, and calling his people to come out, while at the same time he is, in his holy providence, filling that part of the Antichristian kingdom with darkness.

Moreover, the Lord is at this day striking at the root of all national churches, and overthrowing the principles upon which a worldly kingdom has been raised unto Christ by the kings of the earth, and a ministry minding earthly things; by shewing the nature of his kingdom as it is not of this world, and as it is distinguished from the typical kingdom of Israel, whereof it is the antitype. For by taking the kings of the earth instead of the kings of Judah,

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(who were types of Chriſt as well as the prophets and prieſts), and their kingdom inſtead of the kingdom of Judah, (which was a type of the church and heavenly kingdom of Chriſt), and explaining the Old-teſtament prophecies in a private way, and without any foundation for ſuch an interpretation in the New Teſtament, they have raiſed a worldly kingdom for Chriſt, by the aſſiſtance of the kings of the earth giving their power to the clergy. And this is the kingdom of Antichriſt. Thus the Antichriſtian church had its birth in the days of Conſtantine; and thus Antichriſt came to his throne when the ten kings gave him their power; and thus the nations that revolted from Rome became churches, as is manifeſt from their confeſſions of faith touching the magiſtrate, and his power about the worſhip of God, and matters of conſcience and religion. But now the Lord is by his word manifeſting the falſehood of theſe principles, and by bringing the nature of his kingdom further to light, filling the Antichriſtian kingdom with darkneſs; and thus the 1260 years are coming to an end.

SECT. VI.

THE power that ſupports the Antichriſtian kingdom, is the power of the fourth beaſt in Daniel's viſion, which is the Roman empire; as is manifeſt from the 13th and 17th chapters of this book. The woman, the falſe church, ſits on this beaſt: but Antichriſt reigns by this power after it is broken and healed again, and his dominion is an image of the Roman empire that was wounded to death in the ſeventh head.

The dominion of the clergy over the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, within the bounds of the Romiſh empire; and by virtue of the power of the ten kingdoms, into which that empire was broke, when it received the deadly wound, is ſet forth, chap. xvii. under the notion of an eighth head to the beaſt, and chap. xiii. under the notion of another beaſt having horns like a lamb, and ſpeaking like a dragon, exerciſing all the power of the firſt beaſt; and by ſigns and wonders deceiving them that dwell on the earth, ſaying, that they ſhould make an image to the beaſt that was wounded to death, and did live; for he had power to give life to the image of the beaſt, that this image ſhould ſpeak, and cauſe them be killed that would not worſhip the image of the beaſt.

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So that the power of the ten kingdoms, ſupporting the dominion of the clergy over the nations, within the bounds of the empire, is indeed the Roman empire; the beaſt with the ten horns, or a living image of the old empire, exerciſing all the power of it to keep the nations in ſubjection. For by the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, and the ſuperſtitious fear of the authority of the clergy, begot upon mens minds, together with the fear of the power of the ten kings, the nations and multitudes of people in the bounds of the empire, have been as effectually inſlaved, and in as great ſubjection to the dominion of the clergy, and any that reſiſted it, ſuffered as effectually as thoſe who were obnoxious to the old Roman empire before it was wounded to death. Yea it behoved all ranks of men in the nations, to give ſome token of their ſubjection to this dominion of the clergy, or otherwiſe be deprived of liberty of commerce, and the privileges of the nations. For no man might buy or ſell without the mark of the beaſt, *i. e.* a ſign of ſubjection to his authority, and ſome badge of their citizenſhip in that great city.

The number of the beaſt 666, oppoſed unto the Lamb's number, 144, is to be underſtood by man's way of numbering; and the conjecture that it ariſes out of 25, as the Lamb's number out of 12, as its ſquare root, and that as the number 12 prevails in the true church, ſo does 25 in the Antichriſtian Roman church, the mother of harlots, is very ingenious, nor can it be eaſily ſhewed to be falſe. It is manifeſt, that the number of the beaſt is oppoſed to that of the Lamb, or the number of the perſecuting to that of the patient ſociety; and that the one exceeds the other vaſtly. It is likewiſe evident, that the number of the patient ſociety that is with the Lamb, ariſes out of 12, as its ſquare root, and that ſociety has its foundation in the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb. We ſee likewiſe the uſe of the number 144, with its ſquare root, 12, in the deſcription of the new Jeruſalem, chap. xxi. It is alſo plain, that 666 has no other ſquare root but 25, which is more than double the number 12. Now, as it is ſaid the Roman church was at firſt divided into 25 pariſhes, after it departed from the apoſtolical inſtitutions, of which pariſhes the 25 preſbyters under the biſhop of Rome were the firſt cardinals; ſo the author of this conjecture gives a great many inſtances of the prevalency of the number 25 in the Roman church, even as 12 prevails in the deſcription of the new

Jeruſalem.

Jeruſalem. Whatever ſociety then under the name of a church has a broader foundation than the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb, though it will certainly thereby be larger and more numerous than the true church, yet it ſo far has the number of the beaſt's name.

This ſecond beaſt giving life to the image of the beaſt that was wounded to death, or this eighth head of the beaſt which is of the ſeven, ſeems to be the ſame thing with the little horn which Daniel ſpeaks of, as coming up among the ten horns of the fourth beaſt. For theſe ten horns are ſaid, in the Revelation, to be ten kings that receive power one hour with the beaſt, or Antichriſt, which is the horn that makes war with the ſaints, and prevails againſt them. It is ſaid of this horn, that he is diverſe from the ten kings, and that he ſhall ſubdue three of theſe firſt horns; which may ſignify the riſe of the Pope's temporal principality, by the fall of the kingdoms of the Goths, of the Greeks, and of the Lombards in Italy. But tho' theſe three firſt horns were plucked up to eſtabliſh this horn diverſe from the ten; yet the number of ten horns or kingdoms ſtill remains, and the ten kings will give their power to the beaſt till the words of God be fulfilled. Therefore, though there have been great confuſions among the nations within the bounds of the empire, yet the number of ten crowned heads and kingdoms remains unto this day, and ſhall remain in ſome ſhape or other, till the ſtone cut out of the mount without hands ſmite the great image upon the ten toes. The tenth part of the great city fell when the kingdom of the Greeks in Conſtantinople was deſtroyed by the Turks, whoſe power then came to its height, and to a ſtand; and ſo the ſecond wo paſt, Rev. xi. 13. 14. 15. compare chap. viii. 13. and chap. ix. 12. 13. 14. But ſtill the number of ten kingdoms ſtands in the Antichriſtian world, and ſhall ſtand till the words of God be fulfilled.

The beaſt did not kill the ſaints for a long time after their power was ſcattered, and the outer-court trodden under foot. Though the witneſſes propheſied in ſackcloth, *i. e.* in the garments of captivity, Zech. iii. 3. from the beginning of Antichriſt's reign, and even of his appearance; yet the beaſt did not kill them, till their teſtimony was completed, or brought to ſome perfection. Now, their teſtimony was almoſt quite extinguiſhed by the perſecution of the Waldenſes, Wickliffites, and Bohemians; ſo that it lay dead for a ſhort time before its reſurrection at the

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time of the reformation, when the ſeventh trumpet began to ſound, and the vials began to be poured out upon the Antichriſtian world. However, as the beaſt is an emblem of tyrannical, perſecuting, deſtroying power, ſo, during the time of his reign, he holds the ſaints in captivity: and though he have not power utterly to deſtroy the teſtimony againſt him by perſecution, as he did when he was in his full ſtrength before the reformation, and before the earth helped the woman; yet ſtill, ſo far as his power takes place, he perſecutes the remnant of the woman's ſeed: yea, even when his conſumption by the vials comes the length to fill his kingdom with darkneſs, we are told, *they repented not of their deeds*. Yea, after that we find Antichriſt gathering the kings of the earth and their armies unto the battle of the great day. So that even when his kingdom is filled with darkneſs, he will be endeavouring perſecution, till he be fully deſtroyed by the ſeventh vial, and the brightneſs of the Lord's coming.

As patience is every where in the Revelation the character of the true church, ſo in all the repreſentations of the falſe church, and the Antichriſtian kingdom, perſecution appears eſpecially; and the deſtroying beaſt is always the oppoſite of the meek and patient Lamb. As this character appears evidently in all the deſcriptions of Antichriſt, ſo it is much inſiſted on in that moſt notable deſcription that is given us of this evil in the 17th chapter, where the falſe church and the Antichriſtian kingdom is ſet forth as the eſpecial object of the Lord's vengeance, by one of the ſeven angels that had the ſeven vials that contained the wrath of God againſt Antichriſt.

In that viſion we have the falſe church repreſented under the emblem of a woman, as is alſo the true church, chap. xii. which is the antitype of the Old-teſtament church, frequently repreſented under the notion of a woman that had the Lord for her huſband; and the New-teſtament church is frequently thus ſpoke of in the prophecies. The falſe church pretends to be the ſpouſe Chriſt: but is, indeed, the antitype of Babylon, that is frequently ſpoke of in the Old Teſtament as a woman.

The meaning of the word *myſtery* throughout the New Teſtament ſeems to be the hidden ſenſe of a figure; and particularly in this book, as appears from chap. i. 2. and from the 7th verſe of this 17th chapter. According to this ſcriptural uſe of the word *myſtery*, the true church is the myſtery

myſtery of many figures and figurative prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and particularly of the old Zion. And the Antichriſtian church is alſo the myſtery of many figures and figurative prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and ſo ſhe is called MYSTERY. But eſpecially ſhe is the myſtery of all that is ſaid in the prophecies about Babylon; and ſo ſhe is called *Babylon the Great*. The Old-teſtament Babylon was but a poor figure of this Babylon, It is manifeſt from verſe 9. and 18. that the Roman church is here intended.

This church is the head of the grand apoſtaſy from Chriſt, and oppoſition to him. With reſpect to all other falſe churches to which the name of *Babylon* may be applied, according to the meaſure of their conformity to her, ſhe is Babylon the Great. And whereas ſhe calls herſelf the holy mother of God's children, and the holy mother church, on whom all churches ſhould depend, as on their mother, and ſo would paſs for the true ſpouſe of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; ſhe is declared in the viſion to be "the great whore, and the "mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth." Babylon was remarkable for idolatry; ſo is there idolatry in myſtical Babylon the Great, as may be gathered from chap. ix. 20. But Babylon was eſpecially the type of the Antichriſtian kingdom, on account of the perſecution of the people of God, the deſtruction of their temple, and on account of their captivity and bondage there; on which account alſo, the Antichriſtian-ſociety is alſo ſpiritually called *Egypt*.

It has been thought, that by the fornication of the whore, is to be underſtood, the idolatrous worſhip of ſaints and angels, and the image-worſhip of the Roman church, as the church of Iſrael was ſaid to play the harlot when ſhe committed idolatry. But we find the fornication of the Antichriſtian ſociety diſtinguiſhed from their worſhip of demons, and idols of gold, ſilver, braſs, ſtone, and wood, chap. ix. 20. 21. It is true, the fornication of the whore, the mother of harlots, is indeed idolatry, but of another kind, that anſwers full as well to what the Old Teſtament ſays of Iſrael's fornication. The whore pretends, that as the church of Iſrael was eſpouſed to the Lord, ſo is ſhe to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the mother of his ſeed, the children of God. On account of this great pretence, and her acting every way as inconſiſtent with it, as ever the church of Iſrael did when ſhe took up with others in the place of her huſband, the Lord; ſhe is called the whore, and that in

oppoſition to the bride the Lamb's wife. And the grand apoſtaſy from the primitive Chriſtian inſtitution in the New Teſtament, and that under ſome form of Chriſtianity, is very fitly compared to Iſrael's apoſtaſy from the covenant of God.

Wherein then lies the fornication on account of which this great ſociety is called the whore, and the leſſer ſocieties copying after her, are called harlots? Why, it is expreſsly ſaid, chap. xvii. 2. "With whom the kings of the earth "have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the "earth have been made drunk with the wine of her for-"nication." And chap. xviii. 3. "For all nations have "drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and "the kings of the earth have committed fornication with "her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich "through the abundance of her delicacy." And verſe 9. "And the kings of the earth who have committed forni-"cation, and lived deliciouſly with her, ſhall bewail her, "and lament for her."

This fornication, then, is with the kings of the earth. By virtue of this, ſhe ſits on many waters, peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. By virtue of this, ſhe is arrayed in purple and ſcarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious ſtones, and pearls; and the merchants are enriched by her. And by virtue of this, ſhe has the power of the kings to keep the nations in ſubjection to her, and to ſhed the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus. And this great whore, the mother of harlots, (as imperious as ever Babylon the lady of kingdoms was), reigneth over the kings of the earth, with whom ſhe commits fornication. For ſhe ſitteth on the beaſt having ten horns, which are ten kings.

Now, in what ſenſe can ſhe be ſaid to commit fornication with them, but in being ſo joined with them, as the church of Chriſt ought only to be with him, and in taking them ſome way in his place, who is the only huſband of the true church, or in giving to them what the church can only lawfully give to Jeſus Chriſt? And all this muſt be done under a cover, as in the caſe of whoredom, or of a wife's treacherouſly departing from her huſband, and admitting another in his room.

The firſt thing in this treacherous departure of Chriſtian preachers and profeſſors from Jeſus Chriſt, as the alone huſband of the true church, was their aſcribing the throne

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of David, where Chriſt alone ſits, unto the Roman emperor, and afterward unto the ten kings; and ſo they admitted them into the room of Chriſt, as the antitypes of thoſe that ſat on the throne of David; and allowed them to act towards the church, and about the Chriſtian worſhip, as the good kings under the Old Teſtament did about the temple of Jeruſalem.

And as God, the Lord of all the world, ſeparated the nation of Iſrael to be his own kingdom, and was the very king of that kingdom, whoſe judges and kings were not like the kings of the reſt of the nations; but his lieutenants puniſhing prophets that led men to idolatry, as rebels againſt the King of the nation, whoſe government was a theocracy: ſo they made the kings of the nations in the ſame ſenſe God's lieutenants, and ſo put them in the place that Jeſus Chriſt has in the true Iſrael; to do every thing in the nations where they rule, that was proper for the kings of Judah to do in God's kingdom, and that is proper for Jeſus Chriſt to do in the church, which is his kingdom.

The next thing that followed upon this, was, that as Chriſtians were before made by the word and ſpirit of Chriſt, the rod of his ſtrength, and thereby taken out of the nations as a people for his name; ſo now the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, became Chriſtian by the influence of the powers of the earth, ſetting aſide the old national forms of religion, and eſtabliſhing a form of Chriſtianity in their place. Theſe are the multitudes and nations, on which the whore ſitteth, and which tread under foot the outer court of the Lord's houſe; and who were begotten by the powers of the earth, thus joined with the church, that appears hereby a whore, taking others in the room of her huſband, to beget children.

The bringing in of the nations in this manner to the church, (and they could not otherwiſe be brought in; for, when the influence of the goſpel was greater in the days of the apoſtles, and afterward, there were never ſo many converted), made a remarkable change in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity. For as the natural dread of a Deity makes it neceſſary that mankind ſhould have ſome form of religion; ſo the nations can never be brought to ſubmit to any form that is not conſiſtent with the fulfilment of their worldly luſts, and the purſuit of all their worldly intereſts. But the primitive Chriſtian profeſſion was a ſtrait and narrow way,

inconſiſtent with the fulfilment of mens luſts, and that could not ſubſiſt with that purſuit of mens worldly intereſts, without which the nations of the world could not eaſily ſubſiſt. Therefore they ſhaped the Chriſtian profeſſion for the nations; and thus they came to have a form of godlineſs, while they denied the power of it; a form well conſiſtent with the denial of the power: and this is not the Chriſtian, but Antichriſtian profeſſion.

When the nations were thus brought under a form of Chriſtianity, adapted to them, the kings of the earth became the ſupporters and defenders of that form, by their power, againſt all oppoſers. Thus, the whore came to ſit on the ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, adorned with all the glory of this world, inſtead of the beauty of the Lord Chriſt that is upon the true church; and perſecuting the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus, whoſe profeſſion of keeping the commandments of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, is inconſiſtent with the national form of Chriſtianity, whereof the kings of the earth, with whom the whore commits fornication, are defenders; even as Jeſus Chriſt is the defender of the true church, and the true Chriſtian profeſſion.

John is repreſented as wondering with great admiration, when he ſaw a woman ſomething like a church, a profeſſed ſpouſe of Chriſt, yet the antitype of Babylon, ſitting ſo adorned with worldly ornaments on a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, and drunk with the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus. The inconſiſtency of theſe things with all the apprehenſions he had of a church having a pretence of being the ſpouſe of Chriſt, filled him with admiration. The viſion of a perſecuting church aſtoniſhed him. When he ſaw the Roman church, that was once eſpouſed to Chriſt as a chaſte virgin, repreſented to him in this terrible ſhape, and called, *Myſtery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots*, he wondered with great admiration.

If the whore ſit as a queen by the power of the kings of the earth that commit fornication with her, then, according to the meaſure of their ceaſing to commit this fornication, and withdrawing their power from her, ſhe muſt be deſolate and naked, and her fleſh eaten by them, and burnt in the fire. While they agreed, under the conduct of holy providence, to uphold and defend that form of Chriſtianity, which is the Antichriſtian uniformity, ποιησαι γνωμην μιαν, Rev. xvii. 17. and before that oneneſs of mind was broke, the whore ſat in ſtate. But ſo ſoon as the kings of

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the earth began in any measure to disagree about that profession or form of Christianity that they were to maintain and defend, and to take possession of the riches of the church for themselves, then they began to make her desolate, and to eat her flesh. But still their kingdom will not be utterly and in all respects withdrawn from the beast, till the word of God be fulfilled. Yea, even in the final overthrow of Babylon, they will be found lamenting for her. And when the Lord comes from heaven, he will find the kings of the earth and their armies, with the beast and the false prophet, gathered together against him and his kingdom, Rev. xvi. 13. 14. and xix. 19.

SECT. VII.

THE ruin of Antichrist is contained under the seventh trumpet, which comprehends under it the seven vials, whereby the antichristian world is consumed and destroyed to the end. In the conclusion of the sixth trumpet, under which the witnesses were killed, and lay dead in the street of the great city, (and whose testimony revived in the preaching of Luther and Zuinglius), there were some things that made way for the consuming and destroying the man of sin, as the falling of the kingdom of the Greeks and the Greek church, by the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, who are represented as a plague upon the Antichristian world, chap. ix. 20. 21. The Greeks that fled into the west at the taking of Constantinople, brought with them the knowledge of the Greek Testament. The increase of knowledge by this, and the disputes that had been between the Greeks and the Latins, and among the Latins themselves, about the authority of their popes and general councils, and in their controversies with the Wickliffites and Bohemians, made way for the consuming of that kingdom of darkness, by the light of the gospel. The terrible convulsions of the Roman church by the schism of the different opposite popes, and the opposition betwixt popes and councils, did also make way for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the vials on the Antichristian world.

In the 14th chapter we see that the fall of Babylon is declared to be the issue of the preaching of the everlasting gospel to the nations, and of the making it known to the nations, kindreds, and tongues. And upon the proclamation

tion of the ruin of Babylon thereby pointed out, and devoted to deſtruction, and the denunciation of the wrath of God againſt the worſhippers of the beaſt and his image, and thoſe that receive his mark in their foreheads, or in their hand, we ſee them that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus, repreſented, in conſequence of this, as ſufferers, and ſuffering unto death; and they are pronounced bleſſed. Then there are two remarkable periods of the ruin of Babylon; firſt, a harveſt wherein the Son of man appears with his crown, which perhaps may anſwer unto the fifth vial, that fills the kingdom of the beaſt with darkneſs; and then a vintage wherein the wine-preſs of the wrath of God is trod, which may anſwer unto the ſeventh vial, and the battle of the great day that finally ruins Antichriſt. This ſimilitude of the harveſt and vintage, is taken from the prophet Joel, chap. iii. 13. "Put ye in the ſickle, for the "harveſt is ripe; come, get you down, for the preſs is full, "the fats overflow, for their wickedneſs is great." And in that context the prophet ſeems to be ſpeaking of the end of the world, and the judgment to come. The harveſt is before the vintage; and ſo we have the harveſt of Babylon before her vintage. There ſeems to be a reference in what is ſaid, in the Revelation, of the harveſt, to that which is ſpoken by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. li. 33. "The daugh-"ter of Babylon is like a threſhing-floor, it is time to "threſh her: yet a little while, and the time of her har-"veſt ſhall come."

In this harveſt of myſtical Babylon, Chriſt the Son of man appears with his golden crown, as the King of his church, in oppoſition to the dominion of the man of ſin. And in the ſeaſon here pointed at, the time of the harveſt, the nature of his kingdom muſt be brought more clearly to light. And while the authority and dominion of the beaſt is failing, the authority of Zion's King, in his word, muſt be influencing his people to an open profeſſion of ſubjection to his authority in his word. Thus he appears with his golden crown, when he fills the Antichriſtian kingdom with darkneſs. This is, as it were, a prelude to the glorious appearance of his kingdom at his ſecond coming, ſpoken of by Daniel, chap. vii. 13. 14.

When he makes this appearance, and is going about the work of the harveſt, he is repreſented as ſitting on a cloud; which may import, that his conduct in this his work will not be eaſily comprehended, and that he will ſet about it, ſo

ſo as not to be eaſily perceived by the obſervation of man's wiſdom. Yea, his captives, whom he brings back, will, when he turns again their captivity, be like men that dream. Yet it is a white cloud, enlightened with the goſpel of the kingdom, and bringing quiet and tranquillity to his ſubjects, while he is diſquieting the inhabitants of Babylon, and making Babylon deſolate. When he is ſetting about Babylon's harveſt, he will regard his appointed dwelling-place, like a clear heat after rain, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harveſt, Iſ. xviii. 4. And when he is filling the Antichriſtian kingdom with darkneſs, he ſits on a white cloud, for direction, protection, and refreſhment to his own ſubjects. His work in the harveſt ſeems to conſiſt in theſe two things.

Firſt, The gathering together of his people that had been ſcattered in the Antichriſtian kingdom. Before the final ruin of that kingdom, he will have them all gathered to him, either by death, or into the churches of the ſaints, wherein the power of the holy people, that was ſcattered by Antichriſt, is ſome way reſtored. His people muſt be brought out of her, that they ſhare not of her plagues.

But, next, his work in Babylon's harveſt, is to make her deſolate, as a field of corn is by reaping. This is the thing chiefly intended: yet Babylon is not wholly deſolate till the vintage, which makes it fully waſte, and completes its deſolation in a fearful manner.

The iſſue of the harveſt is not repreſented in the viſion, ſo terrible as the iſſue of the vintage, which brings the fearful end of Babylon. For in the end of the harveſt it is only ſaid, "And the earth was reaped," Rev. xiv. 16.; but in the concluſion of the vintage, which is after the harveſt, it is ſaid, "And the wine-preſs was trodden without the city, "and blood came out of the wine-preſs, even unto the horſe-"bridles, by the ſpace of a thouſand and ſix hundred fur-"longs," ver. 20.

As the harveſt ſeems to anſwer to the time of the fifth vial, ſo the vintage anſwers to the time of the ſeventh, under which the battle of the great day of God almighty happens, which is deſcribed more particularly, chap. xix. 11. to the end; where Chriſt is repreſented, in his coming the ſecond time from heaven, as treading the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of almighty God, ver. 15. In the time of that ſeventh vial we are alſo told, that great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceneſs of his wrath, chap. xvi. 19.

Thus

Thus the fearful final ruin of Antichriſt is by the vintage, which coincides with the ſeventh vial that finiſhes the myſtery of God.

The ſeveral ſteps of the gradual conſumption of the man of ſin, till he be finally deſtroyed, are pointed at in the vials which are contained in the ſeventh trumpet: and we find the things that are declared to belong to the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. 19. aſcribed to the vials, chap. xv. 5. 6. and xvi. 18. 21. It was noticed before, that the ſix vials anſwer unto the ſix trumpets. It is likewiſe obſervable, that in the plagues contained in theſe vials, there ſeems to be a reference to the plagues of Egypt, when the Lord was about to deliver his people from their bondage there. So in the firſt vial there is a reference to the plague of the boil, Exod. ix 8. 11.; and in the waters becoming blood, unto that plague of Egypt, Exod. vii. 19. 20. 21.; and in the filling of the beaſt's kingdom with darkneſs, unto the Egyptian plague of darkneſs, Exod. x. 21. 22. 23.; and the plague of hail was likewiſe one of the plagues of Egypt, Exod. ix. 22. 26.

When we conſider how the ſix vials and ſix trumpets anſwer to one another, and find Mahomet, and the powers ſupporting him, in the ſixth trumpet, it would ſeem that the drying up of the river Euphrates is the deſtruction of the Mahometan powers. But it likewiſe appears, that in the ſixth vial there is an alluſion to the preparing the way of Darius and Cyrus, the kings of the Medes and Perſians, into old Babylon, by the drying up of the river; when, turning it out of its channel wherein it ran through the city for its defence, they marched into the city through that channel, and took it. It is certain this was the way that theſe kings of the eaſt became maſters of Babylon. It is alſo clear, from Iſ. xliv. 28. and chap. xlv. that Cyrus, that king of the eaſt, was a type of Chriſt, in ſubduing Babylon, delivering the captive Jews, and building their temple. So we find the Lord ſpeaking thus, Iſ. xliv. 27. 28. "That "ſaith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: "that ſaith of Cyrus, He is my ſhepherd."

But how the Mahometan affair, eſpecially the kingdom of the Turks, that was at firſt a ſcourge upon the Antichriſtian world, Rev. ix. 20. is any way a ſtrength to it, as Euphrates was to Babylon; or rather, how the ruin of it ſhall make way for the ruin of myſtical Babylon, as the drying up of the great river Euphrates made way for the kings of the

the eaſt, to take old Babylon, cannot be ſo well underſtood till the event manifeſt it.

They that have commented on the book of the Revelation, ſeem to be at a great loſs in the explication and application of the vials. Some carry the firſt of them far back, and make them end in the preaching of the firſt reformers. But if the preaching of the reformers was the revival of the witneſſes, which ſeems very probable, then that was immediately before the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet; and that trumpet brings the end of time, as is plainly declared. Now, the ſeven vials are comprehended in the ſeventh trumpet, as the ſeven trumpets are comprehended under the ſeventh ſeal; and the ſeventh vial has no other ſeven under it. But, as has been obſerved, there comes a voice when it is poured out, ſaying, *It is done.* And it is manifeſt, by comparing the latter end of chap. xi. with chap. xv. and xvi. that the things which fall out under the ſeventh trumpet, are brought to paſs by the vials.

The firſt vial poured on the earth, whereby a noiſome and grievous ſore falls on the men that have the mark of the beaſt, ſeems to point at the breach of that uniformity that had been upheld by the united power of the kings of the earth. When the kings or powers began to divide about the form of Chriſtianity they were to maintain and defend in their kingdoms, (and no other but an earthly form of it would be drawn over any whole earthly nation, and defended and ſupported by earthly power); this could not but occaſion ſuch a pain all over the Antichriſtian body, as ſuch a ſolution of continuity (to ſpeak in the old ſtyle of ſome phyſicians) makes in the natural body. When there came to be ſuch a variation in the mark that they ſhould wear, and the image of the beaſt, that was entire before, came to be thus mangled, it could not but be noiſome and grievous to the wearers of the mark, and worſhippers of the image of the beaſt, or the men whom it behoved to embrace that form of religion, and pay reverent ſubmiſſion and ſubjection to that authority of the clergy, that the king or power of the earth, under whom they lived, eſtabliſhed, ſupported, and defended.

By this breaking of uniformity, and this diviſion of the powers of the earth, about that one opinion or form of Chriſtianity that they had ſupported and maintained before, there came to be three diſtinct ſtated communions, the Popiſh, the Lutheran, the Zuinglian or Calviniſt. O-

ther diviſions there are in the great city; but theſe are the three communions, ſtanding in the greateſt oppoſition to to one another, ſo as not to be united together.

This is the diviſion of the city into three parts, not mentioned indeed till the ſeventh vial: but there it is ſpoke of as the ſtate wherein that vial finds the great city; a ſtate preceding the falling of the cities of the nations, by a great earthquake; even a ſtate of the city Babylon, before the giving unto her the cup of the fierceneſs of God's wrath. This was beginning to be the ſtate of the city, from the time of the firſt vial, till the ſeventh finds it in this condition; and then, by the greateſt of all earthquakes, makes the cities of the nations fall, and every iſland flee away.

This firſt plague upon the Antichriſtian world, followed upon the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel by Luther and others, and was a conſequent upon it; as the plagues of Egypt began after Moſes's meſſage to Iſrael, and to Pharaoh, and his refuſing to let Iſrael go. After this, the light of the goſpel could not be ſo far extinguiſhed, nor the teſtimony of the Lord's witneſſes be again ſo laid dead, as it had been before, in the caſe of the Waldeneſes, Wickliffites, or Bohemians, Rev. xi. 7. 11. For by means of this diviſion it had a more free courſe. Thus the kings of the earth, purſuing their own intereſt, and having their own earthly views, helped the woman, and ſo far ſwallowed up the flood of perſecution, that the teſtimony of the goſpel could not again be laid dead as before its reſurrection, Rev. xii. 16.

Thus Babylon began to fall by the firſt vial after the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel to the nations, Rev. xiv. 6. 7. 8.: and that was not merely the preaching of Luther, but alſo the tranſlation of the goſpel into the languages of the nations, and thereby ſpreading the light of it among them. After this began, Babylon began to fall, by the firſt vial, and the diviſion of the city into three parts, beſide other leſſer breaches of the one form of religion. From that time forward ſhe falls more and more, and can never recover her primitive ſtrength and glory, but muſt continue to waſte, till ſhe be utterly deſtroyed by the ſeventh vial.

The ſecond and third vials are upon the waters, which, in this book, ſignify peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues. The e are the waters whereon the whore ſitteth, Rev. xvii. 1. 15. The ſecond vial is poured on the ſea; which, according to this, muſt be the main body of the Antichriſtian peo-

ple,

ple, or ſubjects of antichriſt. Now, this vial turns the ſea into blood, and makes it as the blood of a dead man, and every living ſoul dies in this ſea. Blood denotes wars, fightings, ſtrifes, of one kind or another. And this ſeems to denote that univerſal fret and rancour begot in the minds of the generality of the Antichriſtian people againſt one another, and that univerſal ſtrife and contention throughout the extenſive body of that people, about the mark they ſhould wear, and the form of the image they ſhould worſhip; which natively followed upon the diſagreement of the powers about the form of Chriſtianity they ſhould ſupport and defend.

Inſtead of that unity and regular motion it had before it was broke, it has now no regular courſe; but, being moved every way againſt itſelf, and obſtructed, can have a lively thorough motion no way; ſo it becomes like the blood of a dead man. Thus in this ſea, and in the body of the Antichriſtian people, there came to be ſuch a difference about the form of Chriſtianity, that every one wiſhed univerſally to prevail, as while one party violently ruſhed one way, it was obſtructed by another, as violently ruſhing the contrary, which laſt, in its turn, received the like obſtruction from the former. So that, as the blood of a dead man, it could not have a regular courſe through the whole channel of the body wherein it ran: but, by the obſtruction of the paſſages, ſtagnated; part of it in one veſſel, part in another.

When the ſea, or the main body of the Antichriſtian people becomes thus as the blood of a dead man, it is ſaid, *every living ſoul dies in the ſea.* This cannot be the life of Chriſtianity extinguiſhed by contention about forms. For it is not the Chriſtian, but the Antichriſtian life, that is hurt by the vials, and this is a life that had been among the Anichriſtian people, not Chriſt's people, that is extinguiſhed by diſcord among them. Life imports joy, ſatisfaction, and pleaſure; and we ſee much of this life among the Antichriſtian people, when the teſtimony againſt Antichriſt was laid dead, Rev. xi. 10. But this vial that turns this ſea into blood, puts an end to this life; ſo that in no one part of the Antichriſtian world are any to be found rejoicing in the univerſal prevalency of any one party, but an univerſal grief throughout the whole, becauſe of diſappointment in this reſpect.

Again, life imports union and power of motion. Now, all endeavours of union among the three parts of the divided city became ineffectual. Nor was there any more in

any one of the parts a power of action and motion through the whole; each part of the sea or main body of the Antichristian people remaining stagnated in its own vessel, as the blood of a dead man, without any union or power of communication and free passage among the parts of the catholic body; so they that struggled to establish an union among any of the parts, and to make a communication among them in any shape, became as fishes attempting to swim in a sea of stagnated blood.

Thus the division of the great city that was begun when the powers of the earth began to disagree, as under the first vial, came to be established and confirmed by the second, the consequent of it, and will in all appearance stand till the seventh vial. And this work of the second vial, connected with, and following upon the first, could not well be without some war and bloodshed. But this seems to be specially pointed at under the third vial, though what is there said may refer to both.

The third vial is poured upon the rivers and fountains of waters. If the sea signify the main body of the Antichristian people, the rivers and fountains of waters must signify particular nations and kingdoms of such people, distinguished from one another by the nations of which they are, and where they are educated. Yea, by this time, these people were not only distinguished by their nations and tongues, but now by the form of religion peculiar to every nation; and even the Popish kingdoms are distinguished some way by their forms of it, as France and Spain. The third vial makes these fountains and rivers of waters become blood; and this points to the wars and blood-sheddings within the bounds of those nations, about the particular form of church-government and worship that should be established in each particular nation; while there have been different sets of people in each nation, and parties of clergy, contending who should be uppermost and rule the nation. The civil wars, and murders, and public executions on all sides, all stirred up and animated by the clergy, either in power or grasping at it, have been a manifest fulfilment of this part of the prophecy; which plainly points at bloodshed upon contentions among the people of any of the nations about national forms of religion: and of this France and Britain, among others, have had their large share. No doubt every party thought they were contending and fighting for the true religion and the kingdom of Christ,

Chriſt, when they were by bloodſhed, and war, and perſecution, ſeeking to ſet up or maintain their own form, together with their worldly intereſt, unto the extirpation of all that was inconſiſtent with it. But nothing could be more Antichriſtian, or contrary to the Spirit of Chriſt, and the nature of his kingdom; accordingly it brought along with it the juſt puniſhment of Antichriſtian perſecutions upon thoſe who were filled with that ſame perſecuting ſpirit, that had been always one of the marks of Antichriſt, and had long before killed the witneſſes.

The fourth vial is poured out upon the ſun, which muſt be the light of the Antichriſtian world; and what ſhould this be but one of theſe things, or all of them?

Firſt, The wiſdom of words, or the wiſdom of the ſcribe and diſputer of this world, in oppoſition to Chriſt the wiſdom of God, revealed in the ſcriptures, not in the words that man's wiſdom teacheth, but in the words fit to make men wiſe to ſalvation through faith in Chriſt, and to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works, which is the light of the true church.

2*dly*, That which we may call church-policy, or that fleſhly wiſdom and policy whereby any national form of a church is managed, in a conformity to the courſe of the world in the nation, or in a conſiſtency with the power of the earth, whereby it is upheld or ſeeks to ſupport itſelf. And this is oppoſite to the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt, and to that ſimplicity and godly ſincerity wherein the firſt miniſters of the goſpel had their converſation in the world.

3*dly*, That which we may call church-authority, or the authority of any ſet of clergy over the conſciences of the multitudes and people of any nation, by means of the power of any of the kings of the nations or powers of the earth: and this inſtead of, and in oppoſition to the authority of Chriſt and his word over the conſciences of his willing people, whom his elders and under-ſhepherds are to feed and rule only by the authority of his word, and an example of ſubjection and obedience to his authority in his word.

Theſe three are nearly connected together, and ſerve to ſupport and maintain one another; and when we ſpeak of the light of the Antichriſtian world, in oppoſition to the light of the kingdom of heaven, it muſt comprehend theſe three. The pouring out of the vial on this ſun ſeems to

have

have augmented its action and influence ; but unto the hurt of the Antichriſtian world : for it is ſaid power was given to this ſun to ſcorch men with fire, and men were ſcorched with great heat.

The diviſions about forms of religion produced by the three foregoing vials augmented the force of this ſun ; for theſe ſharpened mens wit to diſpute on all the parts of religion, and every thing that pertained to it, till men came to be overheated in all the diſputes that the wiſdom of words could be exerciſed in about religion : and church-policy being oppoſed unto church-policy, grew to a height, to the great vexation of all the parties of church-politicians, and of all the people influenced by them. Church-authority alſo grew more intenſe by oppoſition, while they that had been undermoſt and felt the ſmart of it, as exerciſed by others, came to be uppermoſt, and obtaining power to exerciſe it, were no leſs fervent in the maintaining of it in their own hands. Thus, when it circulated, and met with oppoſition, it gave no ſmall diſquiet to all the ſlaviſh ſubjects of church-authority.

While men were thus ſcorched by the intenſe heat of the Antichriſtian ſun, it is ſaid, " they blaſphemed the " name of God that had power over this and the foregoing " plagues." For it ſeems the name of God was ſome way near them, or a profeſſion of the wiſdom of his word, and of the ſimplicity of his goſpel, and of ſubjection to his authority in his word, in oppoſition to the wiſdom of words, church-policy, and church-authority ; but they blaſphemed this, and poured all manner of deſpiteful reproach upon it. And further, obſerving that all this heat was about the Chriſtian religion and the church, and that it came in conſequence of the ſcriptures being laid open to the view of all ; they even began to reproach Chriſtianity itſelf, and the word of God, which is his name, as the cauſe of theſe evils. Yea, while each party pleaded ſomething of the word of God, and ſomething of it was oppoſed by all parties, the name of God was blaſphemed among them, ſo far as it croſſed their wiſdom and church-authority. This was remarkable in the laſt age, about the middle, and towards the end ; and it made way for the infidelity and diſregard of church authority and policy, as well as univerſal contempt of perſecuting principles that prevails in this age, agreeably to the fifth vial which is now pouring out, and is breaking the dominion of the clergy over the nations, which

which is the kingdom of the beaſt, as has been before declared.

Under the fifth vial, which has been ſome way before explained, ſect. 5. it is ſaid, *they blaſphemed the God of heaven*, as it was ſaid under the fourth vial, that *they blaſphemed his name*. When God fills the Antichriſtian kingdom with darkneſs, he appears as the God of the kingdom of heaven, or the heavenly kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, in oppoſition to the worldly Antichriſtian kingdom; and he appears as the God of heaven, ready to ſet up a kingdom of his ſaints upon the eternal ruin of Antichriſt's kingdom, as is ſaid in Daniel. In this reſpect he is blaſphemed, while his heavenly kingdom, and the appearance of it, are contemptuouſly ſpoke of by thoſe who ſtand well affected to the kingdom of the beaſt, and, for the ſake of that, reproach and blaſpheme the kingdom of heaven, even as the Jews did before.

The ſixth vial yet to be poured out, ſeems to intimate,

1*ſt*, A notable ſtep toward the final ruin of Antichriſt, in the drying up of the great river Euphrates, that the way of Chriſt, the antitype of Cyrus, may be prepared, to put a full end to the Babyloniſh kingdom, and fully to deliver his captives, and build his temple. Of this we have ſaid ſomething before.

2*dly*, The laſt effort or ſtruggle of Antichriſt, ſome way to unite the kings of the earth againſt Chriſt's kingdom and his people, by the power of deluſion, falſe doctrine and ſigns; whereby they are prepared for the deſtruction which is brought by the ſeventh vial, and is deſcribed, chap. xix. from ver. 17. to the end. The call to watch, the promiſe of bleſſedneſs to them that watch and keep their garments, and the warning of Chriſt's coming as a thief, ſeem to import, that when Chriſt is juſt about to appear, there will be great ſecurity and hazard of pollution by the unclean ſpirits that go out of the mouth of the beaſt and falſe prophet; and that Chriſt will appear in a time when he is as little expected as in any time whatſoever.

The ſhort account of the effects of the ſeventh vial in the end of chap. xvi. is more largely ſet forth afterward. For, after a more clear deſcription of the falſe church, and the power that ſupports her, chap. xvii. and a deſcription of her fearful fall, in the lamentation of all ranks of worldly men over her, and in the joy of the church of Chriſt over her, chap. xviii. and beginning of chap. xix. we have an account

account of all that is done by the ſeventh vial from the 11th verſe of chap. xix. to the 6th verſe of chap. xxi. where we have Chriſt's coming with all his ſaints and angels; the deſtruction of Antichriſt by that coming; the reign of the ſaints; the fearful overthrow of Gog and Magog; the judgment of all the perſons of the wicked dead, and their eternal deſtruction; the new heaven and earth, with the glory of the new Jeruſalem, which is more fully deſcribed by one of the ſeven angels that had the vials, from the 9th verſe of chap. xxi. to the 9th verſe of chap. xxii.; and from thence to the end; laſtly, the concluſion of the book and the ſcripture-prophecy.

PART III.

AS much of the book of the Revelation is taken up in the deſcription of Antichriſt, ſo we have likewiſe in this book ſeveral things ſaid in the deſcription of the true church of Chriſt, and its condition, from his firſt to his ſecond coming, yea, and after that.

SECT. I.

THere is an oppoſition to be obſerved in the deſcription of the true church and the falſe, and that in the things wherein they ſeem ſome way to agree. The beaſt, and the Lamb, who is the ſtrength of the true church, are oppoſed; ſo are the horns of the beaſt and the horns of the Lamb; likewiſe the number of the beaſt, 666, and the number of the Lamb, 144, ariſing out of 12 as its ſquare root, as has been before noticed.

In this oppoſition we are to notice, on the part of the beaſt, tyrannical perſecuting worldly power; for of this that beaſt is an emblem: but on the part of the Lamb, patience in ſuffering, and power thereby to overcome. There is likewiſe a manifeſt oppoſition between the woman committing fornication with the kings of the earth, and adorned with ſuch ornaments as they could furniſh her with; and the woman *clothed with the Sun*, even the Sun of righteouſneſs, Chriſt Jeſus the glory of the true church; *and the moon under her feet*; having this world changeable as the moon under her feet, and likewiſe the carnal ordinances of

of Moſes's law, regulated by the moon under her feet; *and upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars*; wearing the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles as her crown. This is the true New-teſtament church thus diſtinguiſhed from and oppoſed to the great whore that ſits on many waters, or peoples and nations, and commits fornication with the kings of the earth. And here we may again notice, on the part of the whore, perſecution; for ſhe is drunk with the blood of the ſaints; but on the part of the woman that has the crown of twelve ſtars, and of her ſeed, ſufferings.

There is alſo an oppoſition between the two cities, Rev. xvii. 18. and chap. xxi. 9. 10. We may likewiſe notice an oppoſition betwixt the mark of the beaſt and the number of his name, without which no man had freedom of trade in that ſociety; and the ſeal wherewith the ſervants of God are ſealed, the Lamb's Father's name being writ in the foreheads of thoſe that are with him, even thoſe that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jeſus. They that have the mark of the beaſt and his name, whatever privileges they enjoy thereby in this world, are pointed out as the objects of the divine ruin, diſpleaſure, and wrath. And they that are ſealed as the ſervants of God, and have the Father's name written in their foreheads, are pointed out as the objects of the wrath of the beaſt, and of his worſhippers, and as patient ſufferers for the word of God and teſtimony of Jeſus. And whatever loſſes they ſuſtain in this world, they are bleſſed of God, and ſhall at laſt reign on the earth.

There is likewiſe an oppoſition betwixt the nations belonging to the falſe church, (the nations treading the outer-court under foot, the nations, peoples, and multitudes which are the many waters whereon the whore ſitteth, the nations over which power was given to the beaſt that makes war with the ſaints), and the nations belonging to the true church, even the nations of them that are ſaved, that walk in the light of the new Jeruſalem, where none enter but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life, even the kingdoms of this world that become our Lord's, and his Chriſt's, who ſhall reign for ever and ever.

The nations of the beaſt and of the whore, that drink the wine of her fornication, are theſe worldly ſocieties ruled by the kings of the earth that give their power to the beaſt that perſecutes the ſaints. The people of theſe nations ſee

the dead bodies of the witneſſes, and rejoice over them; and theſe are the nations that hate Chriſt's diſciples, as he ſaid, "Ye ſhall be hated of all nations for my name's "ſake;" for theſe nations are ſaid to be angry at the kingdom of our Lord, and his Chriſt. But the nations of the true church are the redeemed out of every nation, Rev. v. 9. 10. even that multitude of all nations which come out of great tribulation, and waſh their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 9. 10. 13. 14. &c. Theſe are the nations of them that are ſaved, of which the prophets ſpoke, that they ſhould be bleſſed in Chriſt, the people that God takes out of the nations for his name, Acts xv. 14. Theſe, however contemptible in the eyes of worldly men, are yet, in God's account, the glory and honour of the kings of the earth, the glory and honour of the nations, Rev. xxi. 24. 26. And theſe are brought into the new Jeruſalem, by means of all the commotions now taking place in the nations of this world, and even by means of all the oppoſition the nations and their kings make unto them, while they give their power and ſtrength to the beaſt to perſecute them: for they enter into the kingdom of God through much tribulation, Acts xiv. 22.; and they come out of great tribulation, and appear in white before the throne, Rev. vii. 14. & xxi. 24.

Thus after the book of the Revelation had pointed them out in low, humbled, ſuffering circumſtances, following the Lamb that was ſlain; and the objects of the hatred, contempt, and diſdain of the nations of this world and their rulers; they are at laſt declared to be the glory and honour of the nations: Even as Chriſt their head, while he was in the world, was by the nation of the Jews diſallowed; and they hid their faces from him, as aſhamed of him; and the Gentiles ſet him at nought, and mocked him, and poured all manner of contempt upon him; yet he was choſen of God and precious at the ſame time, even the moſt glorious perſon in the world in the eyes of God, Luke ii. 32. Now, whereas the book of the Revelation ſets forth the oppoſition of the nations of this world and their kings unto the nations of them that are ſaved, and the bad treatment theſe followers of the Lamb ſuffered from them all along; we are at laſt told, that they were ſo far from being able to ruin them by all their power employed againſt them, that they were, under the conduct of holy providence, but ſerving to bring

bring them into the new Jeruſalem, and to everlaſting reſt and glory there.

By this oppoſition betwixt the nations that come into the new Jeruſalem through much tribulation, and the nations with the power of their kings that belong to the beaſt and the whore, we may underſtand what to think of national churches of all ſorts, and likewiſe how to explain all the prophecies of the Old Teſtament touching the nations, that are pleaded in favour of national churches; contrary to the whole ſcope of the New Teſtament, which ſpeaks very plainly in explication of thoſe prophecies; and contrary to what this myſterious book of the Revelation teaches us, when it ſhows us the nations and the power of their kings, and the body of their people on the ſide of the beaſt, and deſcribes the nations of them that are ſaved, ſpoken of by the prophets, as following the ſlain Lamb, and coming out of great tribulation into the new Jeruſalem, where thoſe only enter that were from the foundation of the world written in the ſlain Lamb's book of life, and who worſhip not the beaſt.

It does not appear from the book of the Revelation, that the true church is to have any other kind of reſt and proſperity in this world, than it had in the days of the apoſtles. But, in all that is ſaid of it as diſtinguiſhed from the Antichriſtian ſociety, it appears in a low, humbled condition, like Chriſt in his humiliation, and like the ſaints in the days of the apoſtles, though not in that primitive order that was deſtroyed by Antichriſt. In this humbled condition it remains till Chriſt come, never riſing above what it did in the apoſtles days; and as to ſpiritual proſperity, ſcarce coming up to that, while the man of ſin remains, who is not finally deſtroyed till Chriſt come the ſecond time. Worldly power, reſt, and proſperity, are, throughout the book of the Revelation, aſcribed to the Antichriſtian church; while tribulation and patience mark the character of the company that follow the Lamb.

As to the expected national converſion of the Jews, with a general converſion of the nations by the gospel, and a ſtate of outward reſt, and freedom from perſecution, with power to bear down all falſe religion in the world, before the ſecond coming of Chriſt; it will not be eaſy to find any ſuch thing in the book of the Revelation. I know the 11th chapter of the epiſtle to the Romans is pleaded for a national converſion of the Jews; but, according to that

paſſage, the nation of the Jews, at that time, muſt be all elected to eternal life, and they muſt be all believers, for it is by faith they muſt all be grafted in. Now, the apoſtle ſays only they ſhall be grafted in, with an *If they abide not ſtill in unbelief.*

Further, he ſpeaks of no other kind of ingrafting of the Jews, but ſuch as that of the reſt of the nations, which took place in the apoſtles days, and they were not ingrafted nationally. The Jews are not to grow naturally on that ſtock of which they ſprang firſt, namely, the promiſe of Chriſt made to Abraham, or Chriſt in that promiſe. But theſe natural branches muſt be grafted in, if they abide not ſtill in unbelief; and through the mercy of the Gentiles they muſt obtain mercy.

As we therefore believe the Old-teſtament promiſes about the nations had certainly an accompliſhment in the grafting in of the nations, according to the promiſe made to Abraham; and as it is manifeſt, no nation of the world, in a national capacity, was then grafted in; ſo no national ingrafting of the Jews can be there ſpoke of, but ſuch an ingrafting as was of the nations in the days of the apoſtles.

The main ſcope of the apoſtle in that chapter is declared in the beginning, *viz.* "That God hath not caſt a-"way his people whom he foreknew." And ſo he ſhews, "that even at that time there was a remnant according to "the election of grace." Agreeably to this ſcope, he tells the Gentiles, that when the fulneſs of the nations is come in, *i. e.* when the full number of the elect among all nations is brought unto Chriſt, then all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved, or, ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved, *i. e.* all the true Iſrael; for the election, both Jews and Gentiles, are the true Iſrael. That this is the apoſtle's meaning, is evident from his calling what he ſays, *myſtery*, or the hid ſenſe of a figure: and all know that the true Iſrael is the myſtery of Iſrael after the fleſh.

It is alſo certain, that all that fleſhly Iſrael to which blindneſs happened, till the fulneſs of the nations come in, ſhall not be ſaved. But the apoſtle ſhews the Gentiles this myſtery, "That blindneſs in part is happened to Iſrael, "till the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in, and ſo all "Iſrael, ſhall be ſaved." To the ſame purpoſe he declares, that "God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might "have mercy upon all," even all the true Iſrael.

While the apoſtle is deſcribing the fearful judgment of Iſrael

Iſrael according to the fleſh in their rejection, and the advantage of the nations thereby, and is magnifying his office as the apoſtle of the nations, if by any means he might provoke the Jews, his fleſh, to emulation, and ſave ſome of them, (which is all he propoſes), he brings ſeveral things to ſtain the pride of the glorying of the nations over the Jews, who were rejected, that they might be grafted in. Now, the things he advances to this purpoſe are inſiſted on by many, as ſerving to ſhew, that the Jews ſhall be nationally brought in; but no ſuch thing can appear by any of thoſe arguments he draws for ſtaining the pride of the nations, *viz.*

1. From the advantages the Jews, the natural branches who were rejected, had beyond them, the wild olives who were ingrafted.

2. From the glory that might appear in grafting them in who were rejected, no leſs than in their rejection.

3. From the power of God to graft in the natural branches rejected, who grafted in the wild olive branches.

4. From his ſeverity to the natural branches that believed not, which would be no leſs to the ingrafted branches if they continued not in the faith.

The apoſtle ſhews the believing nations, that, if they were to glory in themſelves over the Jews that were rejected, theſe had far greater grounds for that kind of glorying than they, in as much as it was more natural for them to be ingrafted into Chriſt than they: and as they ſtood in the ſtock only by faith, while the natural branches were broken off becauſe of unbelief; ſo if they continued not in the faith, they ſhould be cut off, and the natural branches broken off through unbelief, ſhould be grafted in, if they continued not ſtill in unbelief.

So that he is neither aſſerting that the believing Gentiles or nations ſhould be cut off, nor that the unbelieving Jews ſhould be grafted in by faith; but ſhewing the Gentiles that they ſtood in the ſtock only by faith, through the power of divine grace, that was able to graft in the Jews; and therefore there was no reaſon for them to be high-minded, or to glory over the Jews. In all this there is nothing like a national converſion of the Jews, which ſome are ſo big with the hopes of; thereby putting the day of the Lord's coming far away, and expecting a temporal kingdom before he come the ſecond time.

In all the periods of time that are pointed at in the Revelation,

Revelation, we find the members of the true church, that are on the earth, in a ſtate of humiliation, till Chriſt appear the ſecond time. This is their condition under the ſeals, where we find, Rev. vi. 9. 10. 11. the ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held, crying, "How long? O Lord! holy and true, "doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that "dwell on the earth?" The ſtate of theſe ſeparate ſouls is expreſſed by being *under the altar*. Jeſus Chriſt is the New-teſtament altar, by whom the church of the living God offers praiſe continually, Heb. x. 13. 15. This altar of the New-teſtament church is ſet in the higher heavens: and there are the ſouls of departed ſaints, in the moſt intimate nearneſs with the Lord Jeſus. They are under the altar, like the ſparrows and ſwallows neſting about the altar ſpoken of by David, who envied them when he was kept at a diſtance.

Theſe ſouls are employed in the moſt intimate worſhip and ſervice of God. They that are on earth look thither by faith, ſo have acceſs thither, as Iſrael worſhipped from all parts of the land, towards the place where God choſe to put his name, even the place where the altar ſtood. But theſe ſouls are under the altar, intimately preſent with the Lord, and worſhipping in the moſt intimate manner. They are in a ſtate of abſolute ſafety and at reſt. They reſt from their labours who die in the Lord. As they are under the altar, it is ſaid unto them, that they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon. Theſe ſouls are perfectly holy; for this is alſo imported in their being under the altar, and white robes are ſaid to be given them. But whatever be their happineſs and glory in their ſeparate ſtate, they are ſtill in a ſtate of expectation, (as alſo Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is expecting till his enemies be made his footſtool), and are crying for the day of vengeance that God has promiſed, even the time of the redemption of the body, when all enemies, and death, the laſt enemy they had on earth, ſhall be deſtroyed. In anſwer to this their cry, it is ſaid, *white robes are given them*; which may import their being cleared of all charges againſt them, and glorified; and poſſibly it may denote ſomething that ſupplies the want of their bodies to them in that ſeparate ſtate, according to 2 Cor. v. 2. 3. 4.

Further, in our text, "It was ſaid to them, that they "ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon until their fellow-ſervants "alſo, and their brethren that ſhould be killed as they were,

"ſhould

" ſhould be fulfilled." On which we may obſerve, that the followers of the Lamb on the earth are fellow-ſervants with the departed ſaints, and their brethren in the ſame family. They are of the ſame worſhipping ſociety, worſhipping at that ſame altar, under which theſe bleſſed ſouls are at reſt. They are likewiſe their companions in ſufferings; they muſt all, in ſome degree or other, partake in the ſufferings and tribulations out of which they have come. And we may plainly ſee, that this anſwer that is given them imports, that the day of judgment and vengeance will not come till the ſufferings be fulfilled. Then it will come, when the trial of all the elect ſhall be completed, and all the followers of the Lamb conformed to him in his humiliation. From which we may infer, that the ſtate of ſuffering and humiliation is to continue with the followers of the Lamb, the worſhippers at the heavenly altar, till the day of judgment and vengeance, at the appearing of him that comes in flaming fire to take vengeance.

Under the firſt ſix trumpets, the ſaints are in a ſtate of humiliation and ſuffering: for then is the riſe and reign of Antichriſt, when the witneſſes propheſy in ſackcloth, and the woman flies into the wilderneſs, and the nations tread under foot the outer-court of the Lord's houſe; and we need not ſeek the proſperity, but the ſafety of the Lamb's followers, in the time of the proſperity of Antichriſt.

Under the vials, however much the Antichriſtian world be conſumed by the firſt four vials, yet the throne of the beaſt is not touched, nor his kingdom filled with darkneſs till the fifth vial; and even then we are told, they repented not of their deeds. And what are the peculiar deeds of the beaſt's kingdom, if they be not deeds of perſecution? And then under the ſixth vial, whereby the great river Euphrates is dried up, we find the three unclean ſpirits going out of the mouth of the beaſt and falſe prophet, to the kings of the earth, to gather them together to battle againſt Chriſt. So that until the ſeventh vial the followers of the Lamb are ſtill under trial, and undermoſt in the world; and Chriſt comes with the ſeventh vial to judge and take vengeance; and then, and not till then, his ſaints ſhall reign with him on the earth. There is a time when the earth is ſaid to help the woman, by ſwallowing up the flood that the dragon caſt out of his mouth to carry her away; but even then the dragon is wroth with the woman, and goes to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, that keep the commandments

commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt. In a word, patience is as much the character of the true church before the coming of Chriſt, as perſecution is of the falſe.

SECT. II.

WE have the moſt remarkable deſcription of the true church from the firſt to the ſecond coming of Chriſt, in chap. xii. of the Revelation, which ſeems to be an explication of the firſt promiſe, Gen. iii. 15. For here is the woman and her ſeed, and the ſerpent or the dragon; here is the enmity between the woman and the ſerpent, the ſufferings of the ſeed of the woman, and ſomething of the victory of the woman's ſeed, as far as this paſſage carries the hiſtory of it: for the final ruin of the ſerpent and his ſeed is afterwards declared in the 19th and 20th chapters.

By the woman in that firſt promiſe, we are to underſtand Eve, not as the mother of all that ſhould deſcend from Adam by her: for in that capacity ſhe had been drawn into friendſhip with the ſerpent, and thus all Adam's poſterity were involved with him and her in ſin and death. But in that firſt promiſe ſhe ſtands in another capacity, in oppoſition to the ſerpent, *viz.* as the mother of that ſeed that ſhould ſuffer from the ſerpent, and, by ſuffering, overcome him and his ſeed. The mother of that ſeed betwixt which and the ſerpent's ſeed there ſhould be enmity. According to this promiſe, Chriſt deſcended from Eve, being born of a woman, a virgin. And he came not into the world by virtue of that word to Adam and Eve in innocence, *Be fruitful and multiply*, but by virtue of this word, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe*, &c. The elect of Adam's race are the ſeed of the woman, by their being Chriſt's; even as they are ſaid to be Abraham's ſeed, by their being Chriſt's. But we are likewiſe to conſider, that as the elect come into the world with the reſt of mankind by virtue of that word, "Be fruitful and multiply," they have no relation by fleſh and blood to Jeſus Chriſt, more than the reſt of mankind. But as they come into the world, and deſcend from Eve, by virtue of this word, *The ſeed of the woman*, he is partaker with them in fleſh and blood; and ſo he is related to them by this promiſe, as he is not to the reſt of the world, from whom he

he and they are diſtinguiſhed in the promiſe, as the ſeed of the woman, betwixt which and the ſeed of the ſerpent there is enmity. Adam looking upon Eve, as ſtanding in this capacity in the promiſe, calls her *the mother of all living*; even all the ſeed of the woman, in oppoſition to the ſeed of the ſerpent, left under death, and appointed to deſtruction with the ſerpent. Thus he profeſſes his faith in the firſt promiſe, in the name given to his wife; after ſhe was ſet up in that promiſe, in oppoſition to the ſerpent, as the mother of that ſeed that ſhould overcome the ſerpent and his ſeed. And as his primitive wiſdom appeared in the name he gave his wife, ſo his faith appears in the name he gives her; *the mother of all living*.

Further, Eve, in this promiſe, ſtands as a type of the church, the mother of God's children, Chriſt being the firſt born among many brethren, the firſt begotten of the dead; and all his people raiſed from treſpaſſes and ſins, and to be raiſed from the dead at the laſt day, the remnant of her ſeed. This is the true mother of all living; Jeruſalem, which is above, and is the mother of us all. Thus, as the apoſtle Paul expreſsly makes Hagar a type of the old covenant at Sinai, and the Old-teſtament church, and Sarah the type of the New-teſtament church and new covenant; ſo, in this viſion that John had of the church as a woman with her ſeed, the church is ſet forth as the antitype of Eve, as ſhe is ſpoke of in that firſt promiſe. Yea we find Eve in another caſe expreſsly made a type of the New-teſtament church, Eph. v. 30. 31. 32. And why ſhe may not be a type of the church conſidered as the mother of God's children, as well as of the church conſidered as the ſpouſe of Chriſt, there is no good reaſon can be given. Nor is there any reaſon why the myſtical book of the Revelation might not ſet her forth as the type of the new covenant and New-teſtament church, as well as Paul's epiſtle to the Galatians ſets forth Sarah as the type of that ſame covenant, and that ſame church.

The deſcription of this woman, the mother of God's children, is very different from that of the whore that commits fornication with the kings of the earth; and the woman, the New Teſtament church, is alſo, by this deſcription, diſtinguiſhed from the church of the Old-teſtament. She appears *clothed with the ſun*. She has no other covering, no other ornament, but Chriſt the Sun of righteouſneſs. With this alone, ſhe far outſhines the whore clothed and adorn-

ed with the ornaments she has from the kings of the earth, with whom she commits fornication: for Christ only is the cloathing and the glory of the true church. Being thus clothed, she shines as the sun in the eyes of all that behold his glory. Her God is her glory.

She appears with *the moon under her feet.* She is above all the worldly rudiments of Moses's law, though yet in some sense she stands on them; and she treads on all the worldly glory that the false church rejoices in. The New-testament church is not a worldly society; she has this changeable world under her feet: for whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory over the world, even our faith.

She appears with *a crown of twelve stars on her head.* She is not subjected to the law of Moses as the church of the Jews, nor to the doctrines and commandments of men as the false church. She glories not in these: but she wears the doctrine of the twelve apostles of the Lamb as her crown. She is a queen; she wears a crown, and reigns as well as the whore. But she reigns only there, where the pure unmixed doctrine of the twelve apostles prevails; and where a subjection to that appears, there she appears reigning: whereas the great whore and the harlots reign by the power of the kings of the earth, and by that one opinion, μίαν γνῶμην, which they make.

The first thing we are to notice in the history of this woman, is her *travailing in hard labour to bring forth a son.* This labour was in the death of Christ, and the product of it was Christ, as the first born from the dead. Thus, he was born *to rule all nations with a rod of iron.* When we consider him as the first born from the dead, and in that character representing the whole redeemed body, we are not to look upon him quite abstractly from that body whereof he is the head. For as he died to make *of these twain,* (Jews and Gentiles) *one new man in himself*; so this one new man is the *man-child*, brought forth by the labour and travail that was in the satisfaction given to the law and justice of God in the death of Christ. And this one new man is to rule the nations with a rod of iron: for Christ declares that his members are to have communion with him in this, Rev. ii. 27.

This *man-child* is said to have been *caught up unto God, and to his throne*, which signifies the exaltation of Christ, the first born from the dead, and likewise the raising up of his

his people from treſpaſſes and ſins, to ſit together in heavenly places, in him their head, the head of his body, the church, which is his fulneſs. Thus the new covenant and New-teſtament church became a mother, when this man-child was brought forth, and caught up to God and his throne; and then ſhe appeared quite diſtinct from the Old-teſtament church, as being now Jeruſalem above, the mother of us all.

In oppoſition to her, when travailing to bring forth this man-child, and to this man-child, we ſee a great red dragon, having ſeven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns on his heads. By which we are to underſtand, Satan, that old ſerpent, directing the power of the Roman empire in the Jewiſh church, againſt Chriſt and his members, or againſt that one new man, the man-child brought forth by the woman in labour, to deſtroy him in his firſt appearance in the world. By the ſeven heads and ten horns, the power of the Roman empire is deſcribed in this book. And though the ſeventh head was not yet come, when the dragon firſt appeared againſt the man-child, and at the time of his birth; and though the ten horns had not crowns as yet (for theſe kings had then no kingdom), yet the power that was then exerted by Satan againſt the man-child, was the power of that ſame empire that ruled in the Jewiſh church, where the woman firſt appeared travailing to bring forth the man-child.

This power was not only exerted by Satan in the Jewiſh church againſt the woman and her man-child, but was engaged in ſupport of the worſhip then prevailing throughout the empire; even the idolatrous Heathen worſhip which was in effect paid to Satan: and by this Chriſtianity was oppoſed in the beginning. As to which idolatrous worſhip, on the one hand, the dragon and his angels are repreſented in the viſion, as fighting to maintain and ſupport it againſt the teſtimony of the woman's ſeed; and on the other hand, Michael and his angels fighting againſt the dragon, to caſt him down from that excellency, and that ſtation which he maintained againſt the woman and her man-child. The iſſue of this war is, that the dragon did not prevail in that ſituation, and was not capable to maintain that high ſtation wherein he was placed againſt the church, but was caſt down from it; and this downfal took place in the demoliſhing of the church and nation of the Jews, and in the

bringing down of the Heathenish religion of the Roman empire.

Herein the church observes and praises God's saving strength, and the power of Christ's kingdom, against that whereby the saints were so long tried, that matter of accusation might be furnished against them. In the war that had this issue, the part of the saints or children of the true church is represented in these words: "They overcame "him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their "testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." Hitherto, then, they are patient sufferers according to the first promise.

But the issue of this war is not the exaltation of the woman, nor the deliverance of her seed from the opposition of the dragon. For he goes to work another way, with great wrath, and persecutes the woman which brought forth the man-child. No sooner is the man-child brought forth, and the woman rid of the Jewish church, and the opposition from Heathenism, than *she flies into the wilderness*. This is twice mentioned. First, verse 6. before the issue of the foresaid war; and it seems to be mentioned there, though it did not fully take place in that period, because, as the apostle said, the mystery of iniquity was then working; and it took place in the issue of the foresaid war which made way for it. The time, times, and half a time, or 1260 days, are the season of Antichrist's reign, as has been before noticed, which could not take place till Satan was cast down from his first station wherein he fought against the church; and thereby it took place, so that deliverance was an introduction of this evil to Christ's members on the earth. So the woman, the church of the New Testament, flies into the wilderness; and the time of her being in the wilderness, after she flies there, is 1260 days, or three years and a half.

In this representation of the woman's flying into the wilderness, there may be an allusion, as some think, unto Israel, in the waste howling wilderness, whom the Lord says he bare as on eagles wings, and who were sustained by him there in an extraordinary manner. But it seems rather to refer to Elijah in the wilderness in the days of Jezebel; and the nourishing of the woman in the wilderness, may refer to his being fed by the ravens; or rather, to his being fed with bread and water brought to him in an extraordinary manner in the wilderness, when he fled from Jezebel,

Jezebel, 1 Kings chap. xix. And it is then that he says, ver. 14. "The children of Israel have forsaken thy cove-"nant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets "with the sword; and I, I only am left, and they seek "my life, to take it away."

Some think, that by the two wings of a great eagle given to the woman, that she might fly into the wilderness, we are to understand the power of the two Christian emperors; for when the Roman empire got on the form of Christianity, it was divided under two emperors. Now, it is true, these Christian emperors did pretend to support Christianity: but, as they cherished the man of sin from his birth, in the time of Constantine, and nourished him till he sat down on his throne; so these wings served for no other purpose to the woman, but to carry her with great speed to the wilderness.

From the time that Constantine began to employ his power in favour of Christianity, the Christian institution laid down by the apostles of Christ (from which Christians had begun to swerve before) was entirely marred and corrupted by the adapting of it to the Roman empire; so that the man of sin, being thus brought forth, grew apace. And in far less than two ages, he was mounting his throne, and the woman was in the wilderness. Therefore, if these be the two wings, the same that cherished Antichrist, they did indeed speedily carry the woman, but carried her into the wilderness, *i. e.* into such a state as that wherein Elijah was when he fled from Jezebel into the wilderness. And there she appeared, not in that order of divine institution wherein she appeared before her flight, and when she was persecuted by the dragon; she is now in the wilderness, and so hid from the face of the serpent. There is not now that visible appearance against him that was in the first churches of the saints. The outer-court of the temple is trodden under foot of the nations, and the woman is hid in the wilderness. There she is supported, not by the means of Christ's institutions in the churches of the saints, but in an extraordinary way, as Elijah was fed in the wilderness.

While the woman is thus away from the face of the serpent, she is not so far beyond his observation, but that he still pursues her with the effects of his wrath. For, though she no more appears openly before his face, as at the beginning in the churches of the saints; yet the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and the serpent sets himself utterly to swallow her

her up, as to any the leaſt appearance ſhe is capable to make even in the wilderneſs. So he caſts a flood of perſecution after her, that ſhe might be carried away of the flood. This may anſwer unto the time of the killing of the witneſſes, and to the time of the oppoſition made to the knowledge of the ſcriptures, when they began to be brought forth into the languages of the nations.

But he prevailed not in this miſchievous attempt. For it is ſaid, "the earth helped the woman, and ſwallowed up "this flood." The powers of the earth, taking occaſion from the bringing of the ſcriptures to light, to purſue their own intereſt, oppoſed the perſecution that aroſe againſt the word of God; in ſo much that the ſcriptures came to light, in the languages of the nations, and continue ſo. The kings of the earth herein promoted their own ends. But it proved a help to the woman whatever they intended. For, in conſequence of this, we have *the remnant of her ſeed keeping the commandments of God*, (in oppoſition to the commandments of men); and *having the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*, in oppoſition to the teſtimony of men. But they are ſtill the objects of the ſerpent's wrath, and they are perſecuted no leſs after the help the woman had from the earth in the preſervation of the ſcriptures. For the dragon is wroth with the woman, and goes to make war with the remnant of her ſeed that keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt. Thus ends the hiſtory of the woman, who appears next in the concluſion of this prophecy, at the time of Chriſt's coming, even in the times of the reſtitution of all things, as a bride adorned for her huſband.

But from this hiſtory of the church, from the firſt to the ſecond coming of Chriſt, we may obſerve, that the true church is to be known by theſe two characters.

1. Faith and obedience to the word of God; in oppoſition to faith in Antichriſt, and obedience to his commands. Thus we find, in this chapter, "They overcame by the "blood of the Lamb, and the word of their teſtimony." And again, "The remnant of her ſeed that keep the com-"mandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus "Chriſt." And chap. xiv. 12. "Here are they that keep "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus."

2. Patience in ſuffering for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God; or for keeping the commandments of God, after the example of the Lamb that was ſlain.

This

This is likewiſe manifeſt in this chapter. And in chap. xiv. 12. we have this alſo, *Here is the patience of the ſaints.*

When the woman was hid in the wilderneſs, theſe two characters did not appear ſo remarkably. But where-ever the church is viſible, as it was at the beginning, ſo to the end of the world, theſe two marks will be viſible. And where-ever theſe appear, there only appears the true church, in oppoſition to all who hold the doctrines and commands of men, all who maintain perſecuting principles, and graſp at worldly dominion: for theſe are the marks of the falſe church.

SECT. III.

THE two notes or marks of the true church did not ſo appear on the members of the body of Chriſt, under the reign of Antichriſt, as when they walked in the order of viſible churches, according to Chriſt's inſtitution, before the nativity of the man of ſin, and as they will appear when his kingdom is filled with darkneſs. Yet, even during his reign, theſe marks ſomeway appeared on all thoſe who ſuffered patiently from Antichriſt, for any part of the word of God and teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt. Before Antichriſt's nativity, they were very viſible in the churches of the ſaints, as appears from chap. vi. 9. and from chap. xii. 10. 11. And after he begins to fall in conſequence of the publiſhing of the everlaſting goſpel, we ſee them again remarkably, chap. xiv. 12. and from thence to the coming of Chriſt, chap. xii. 17.

We find two remarkable publications of the goſpel in the book of the Revelation, in conſequence of which the vengeance of God is executed on the enemies of the goſpel, and the true church appears by the foreſaid marks.

The firſt is under the firſt ſeal, chap. vi. 1. 2. where the wonderful ſucceſs of the goſpel of the kingdom is repreſented by "a white horſe, and him that ſat on him, who "had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went "forth conquering and to conquer." This was the firſt publication of the goſpel, by the preaching of the apoſtles, in the languages of the nations, by the gift of tongues. This was followed with vengeance on the prime oppoſers of the goſpel, the Jews; who, after they had been joined with the Romans againſt the goſpel, broke peace with them, and

and were deſtroyed by them, after an obſtinate reſiſtance: wherein alſo they killed one another, every man's ſword being turned againſt his fellow, in ſuch ſort, that the preſervation of any of them was owing to the taking of their city, and deſtroying their temple. This ſeems to be pointed at in the ſecond ſeal, by "the red horſe and him that "ſat on him, to whom it was given to take peace from the "earth, and that they ſhould kill one another," ver. 3. 4. And though the opening the third ſeal, ver. 5. 6. ſeems to repreſent a failure of the growth and multiplication of the word of God, and the conſolations of the goſpel, by mens beginning to make merchandiſe and gain of it; and the fourth ſeal, ver. 7. 8. ſeems to repreſent ſuch a perſecution of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and ſuch temptations upon them, as tended to the apoſtaſy and eternal ruin of many profeſſors: yet the fifth ſeal, ver. 9. 10. 11. ſhews us the iſſue of it in the blood of many faithful martyrs, calling for vengeance on thoſe who ſpilt it, as well as on thoſe profeſſors that joined the perſecuting ſociety, and betrayed the cauſe to them. The vengeance of God on the perſecuting ſociety, the Roman empire Heathen, as an anſwer ſo far to the cry of the martyrs blood, and as a type of the full anſwer, in the final vengeance on the perſecuting world, is repreſented in the opening of the ſixth ſeal, ver. 12. 17. And this is the ſame thing with the caſting down of the dragon, chap. xii. 9. After which we are told, that the ſaints, in that open conflict they had hitherto had with him, and before the woman fled from his face, "had overcome him by the "blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, "and loved not their lives unto the death." Thus far, then, the two marks of the true church appeared viſibly, in conſequence of the firſt publication of the goſpel; until the woman fled into the wilderneſs from the face of the ſerpent; and the goſpel, that was preached by the apoſtles, and kept by the firſt churches in the ſcriptures of the apoſtles, was carried away in the true Babyloniſh captivity; where it remained very much hid, till

The ſecond publication; of which we alſo read in the book of the Revelation, chap. xiv. 6. 7. where, after the Lamb's company, in the time of Antichriſt's reign, had been repreſented to John, he ſays he "ſaw another angel "fly in the midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting go-"ſpel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and language, and people."

" people." And this was in the ſixteenth century, when the holy ſcriptures were brought forth to the view of the nations and peoples that were worſhipping the beaſt and his image.

There was a moſt remarkable providence about this, and ſeveral things contributed to it under the direction of admirable Providence. The taking of Conſtantinople by the Turks, and the flight of the Greeks from thence into Italy, and the weſtern parts, brought the knowledge of the tongues wherein the goſpel was written into theſe parts; and tranſlations of the ſcriptures commenced from thence.

The invention of the art of printing about that time, was a notable providence, and contributed much to the ſpreading of the ſcriptures among the nations. By means of this, the apoſtles again travelled through the nations in their writings, and propheſied again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings, Rev. x. 11. And when the goſpel was tranſlated, by men raiſed up of God for that purpoſe, into the languages of the nations, and theſe tranſlations ſpread every where, by means of the art of printing; this anſwered the end of the gift of tongues, that was uſeful in the firſt publication of the goſpel, before it was committed to writing.

And when Luther and Zuinglius, in contending againſt indulgences, were obliged, in the iſſue of their contention, to have recourſe to the holy ſcripture, and contend for it, as the only rule of Chriſtianity; and theſe ſcriptures were not denied to be of divine inſpiration by their adverſaries, who had ſcarce another plauſible anſwer to their ſcriptural arguments, but *the authority of the church*, which yet could have no authority without the ſcriptures: this turned the eyes of people to the ſcriptures; and the Roman church perceiving this, ſet themſelves by all means to put a ſtop to this publication of the goſpel, or to the ſpreading of the knowledge of the ſcriptures, by the tranſlations, among the nations.

This ſecond publication of the goſpel is the ſame thing that ſeems to be pointed out by the reſurrection of the witneſſes, Rev. xi. 11. 12. And it was followed with vengeance on the oppoſers of it, as was the firſt. It was followed with the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the vials on the Antichriſtian world. And in that fourteenth chapter, where it is moſt expreſsly mentioned, we find it followed with a proclamation of the fall of Babylon;

and with another proclamation after that of vengeance on them that worſhip the beaſt and his image, and receive his mark. In oppoſition to whom, we are called to take notice of " the patience of the ſaints, and of them that keep the " commandments of God and the faith of Jeſus."

So that, in conſequence of the ſecond publication of the goſpel, the two marks of the true church become more viſible in the world. And as the work of conſuming the man of ſin by the ſpirit of the Lord's mouth goes forward, ſo will the marks of the true church be more viſible; but whereas Antichriſt will not be utterly deſtroyed till the Lord come the ſecond time, the dragon will be making war with the remnant of the woman's ſeed that keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt till the Lord come. And thus ſhall the true church appear in conformity to Chriſt, in his humiliation, till he come.

But, from the nativity of Antichriſt, till he begin to be conſumed by the ſecond publication of the goſpel, theſe marks of the true church did not appear viſibly to the world, in the order of viſible churches according to Chriſt's inſtitution: nor do they ſo clearly appear in that way, till his kingdom be filled with darkneſs. Yet we find the faith and the patience of the ſaints taken notice of, under the beaſt's reign, chap. xiii. 10. and in the period pointed at in the epiſtle to the church in Thyatira, Rev. ii. 18.—29.

In that epiſtle, the Lord complains of the members of the true church their ſuffering the great whore typified by Jezebel; yet we find him taking notice of their charity, ſervice, faith, patience, and their works. All this he obſerves about them, though they were in ſuch a caſe as they that did not bow the knee to Baal in the days of Jezebel, and as Elijah was in at that time. And he takes notice that their laſt charity, ſervice, faith, patience, and works were more than the firſt. For they appeared more openly contending againſt Antichriſt, and ſuffering from him for the word of God in the latter end of that period, than in the beginning of it. And this was obſervable in the confeſſion and ſufferings of the Waldenſes, Wickliffites, and Bohemians, near the end of that period.

During the time of Antichriſt's reign, the witneſſes are ſaid to propheſy and teſtify in ſackcloth, *i. e.* in the garments of captivity. For here there is a plain reference to the filthy garments on Joſhua, the ſon of Joſedeck the high prieſt,

prieſt, or the garments of his captivity; and when theſe are taken away from him, it is ſaid to him, "I have cauſed "thine iniquity to paſs from thee; and will clothe thee "with change of raiment," Zech. iii. 4. So that this points out to us a ſtate of captivity, and a ſinful mournful ſtate, rather than a ſtate like that wherein the firſt Chriſtians were walking in the goſpel-order, and patiently bearing the croſs after Chriſt. Yet, in this ſame ſtate of captivity, they propheſy and teſtify againſt the corruption of Chriſtianity, and the Antichriſtian abominations: though it would ſeem, that their teſtimony is not fully brought forth, or all publiſhed till after ſome time; even till then, when the beaſt is ſaid to make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them.

In what is ſaid of the two witneſſes, there is a manifeſt reference to Moſes and Aaron in Egypt; as when it is ſaid, "They have power over waters to turn them to "blood, and to ſmite the earth with all plagues, as often as "they will," chap. xi. 6. And likewiſe to Elijah, in the days of the apoſtaſy of the ten tribes, and in the time of Jezebel; as when it is ſaid, "If any man will hurt them, "fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their "enemies. Theſe have power to ſhut heaven, that it rain "not in the days of their prophecy," ver. 5. 6. Compare 1 Kings xvii. 1. and 2 Kings i. 2.—8.

There is further a reference here to the time of our Lord's miniſtry on the earth, in the church of the Jews. For the death of the witneſſes and their reſurrection bear a manifeſt alluſion to the Lord's death and reſurrection; and the bodies of the witneſſes are ſaid to "lie dead in "the ſtreet of the great city, where our Lord was cru-"cified."

So that the ſtate of the people of Chriſt, the members of his church, in the days of this propheſying of the witneſſes, is like the ſtate of Iſrael in Egypt, and of the 7000 that did not bow the knee to Baal in the time of Jezebel, and of the captive Jews, while their temple and the walls of the city lay in rubbiſh; and like the ſtate of things in the days of our Lord's miniſtry among the Jews; and like the condition of Lot in Sodom. For the city wherein the witneſſes lay dead, is ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where alſo our Lord was crucified, as being the antitype of theſe.

Hence we ſee that the members of the true church in

that ſtate, are not in the viſible church-order inſtituted for them by Chriſt. The outer-court of the Lord's houſe is then trodden under foot of the nations. Only the holy ſcriptures remained, and were preſerved in this ſad ſtate of things by the wonderful providence of God, and were all the while exactly fulfilled; at the ſame time that oppoſition was made, leſs or more, by means of ſcripture-light, to ſeveral parts of the Antichriſtian corruption, till at laſt the ſcripture-teſtimony againſt the whole of it was brought forth, one way or other, by the Waldenſes and Wickliffites; and then the beaſt made war with the witneſſes.

The witneſſes ſeem to be the Old Teſtament and the New. For as our Lord ſays of the Old-teſtament ſcriptures, *Theſe are they which teſtify of me*; ſo the New Teſtament concurring with the Old makes up his two witneſſes. They are the *two anointed ones*, being given by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt; and the *two candleſticks that ſtand before God*, and ſerve to enlighten the earth through that precious oil, the Holy Ghoſt, ver. 4. Compare Zech. chap. iv.

The concluſion of the New Teſtament forbids us to expect any new inſpired prophet, or worker of miracles, after the New-teſtament prophecy was finiſhed. And there is no other prophecy or infallible teſtimony belonging to the true church, but that of the Old Teſtament and the New. And the power of the true church is the power of the word of God, or of the Old and New Teſtament. According to the New Teſtament, we cannot look upon any two men as the Lord's witneſſes, who come in any age after the apoſtles, propheſying with ſigns and wonders.

The great whore typified by Jezebel calleth herſelf a propheteſs, and the coming of the man of ſin is with ſigns and lying wonders. But the ſcripture-prophecy belongs to the true church, even that ſame prophecy and divine teſtimony that was attended, at its giving out, by all the ſigns and wonders recorded in the ſcriptures. All that happened in the 1260 days, was the effect of the word of ſcripture-prophecy. The oppoſition and vexation that the builders of the Antichriſtian kingdom received from time to time, in the ſeveral ſteps of their apoſtaſy, aroſe by means of theſe ſcriptures; ſo that the Antichriſtian world might have ſaid of theſe two witneſſes, as Ahab ſaid to Elijah, *Art thou he that troubleth Iſrael?*

The Lord makes theſe two, concurring together, his witneſſes,

witneſſes, and not ſeparated from one another, in oppoſition to the Antichriſtian ſociety, that eſtabliſhed itſelf by inſiſting on the Old-teſtament prophecy ſeparate from the New, and contrary to it; and thus it became the antitype of the city where our Lord was crucified. But, while they pretended to find a foundation for a worldly church and a hierarchy, a worldly kingdom to the Meſſiah, and perſecution, and a worldly ſanctuary in the Old Teſtament; the concurring teſtimony of the two witneſſes, the Old and New Teſtament, ſtill tormented them, till at length they brought the authority of theſe two witneſſes in ſubjection to the authority of a general council, the repreſentative of the catholic church militant, (as they call that which the ſcripture calls the man of ſin), and extirpated all profeſſion of ſubjection to the authority of theſe two witneſſes, as oppoſed to the authority of that church, which was ſet above the ſcriptures.

Now, this ſeems to be the killing of the witneſſes, who lay dead for a ſmall time, in the final iſſue of the extirpation of the Bohemian profeſſion of ſubjection to the authority of the ſcriptures as above the church.

The people of the nations rejoiced in this victory over the witneſſes who had tormented them; but the bodies of the two witneſſes in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament were not buried out of ſight altogether. They would not ſuffer them to be buried, but they lay dead in the great city in the ſtreet; in a contemptible condition, trodden under foot, and expoſed indeed to view, but without ſpirit and life, without their ſenſe and meaning, or power to operate on the minds of the people of the nations. For they were expoſed to the nations in an unknown tongue. And as to thoſe who underſtood that tongue, whoſe intereſt was againſt the witneſſes; the ſcriptures, the bodies of the witneſſes, lay in ſubjection to the authority of the church. Thus they lay dead a ſhort ſpace, till the ſpirit of life entered into them. And this was when their authority and teſtimony began again to be acknowledged and inſiſted on, in oppoſition to the authority of the church, and pleaded firſt by the brethren of Bohemia, and then by Zuinglius and Luther, as above the authority of man's teſtimony, and againſt the pretended authority of the Roman church.

Thus the ſcriptures began to be laid open in their ſenſe and meaning, and were no more as dead bodies without life; but began to operate again upon the minds of the people

people of the nations, and then they were exalted, in conſequence of the ſpirit of life thus entering into them, by being tranſlated into the languages of the nations.

This exaltation of the witneſſes, wherein there is an alluſion to our Lord's aſcenſion, ſeems to be the ſame thing with the angels flying through the midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting goſpel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, of which before. Thereby the conſumption of the man of ſin began; for after this the ſeventh trumpet is blown, and under it the vials are poured out.

But however the witneſſes were now above the reach of the Antichriſtian power, ſo that they could not be again overcome and killed; yet the members of the true church ſeem not to be brought ſo forth of their captive ſtate, as to appear in the true primitive order of viſible churches, according to the ſcripture-teſtimony, till the fifth vial. For till then the beaſt's kingdom is not filled with darkneſs, and the end of the beaſt's reign cannot be ſaid to be before then, nor the end of the 1260 days, which is the time of that reign. But ſo far as any, during the whole time of that reign, confeſſed, and openly profeſſed to receive the teſtimony of the two witneſſes, and patiently ſuffered in ſo doing; ſo far the marks of the true church appeared during that reign. But, during the reign of Antichriſt, the true church appears not viſibly repreſented, in a regular viſible church, every way conform to the goſpel-inſtitution; without which the church cannot be ſo viſible as at the beginning, nor the marks of it ſo apparent. It is true, the members of the true church that are on earth in the reign of Antichriſt, are ſaid to be ſealed or marked, with a reference to what is ſaid in Ezekiel's prophecy, of ſetting a mark on the men that ſigh and cry for the abominations done in the land, Ezek. ix. and to have the Father's name written in their foreheads. As, by this ſealing or marking in their foreheads, they are ſecured from ruin, ſo they are likewiſe diſtinguiſhed from the beaſt's company; but this ſeems chiefly to be in the ſight of God, and not ſo openly in the ſight of men. They ſtand thus marked with the Lamb on Mount Zion; they are found adhering to him as the head of the church of the firſt-born written in heaven: and they are engaged in the worſhip of that inviſible Mount Zion, the heavenly Jeruſalem. For they ſing a new ſong before the throne, and before the four living creatures and elders, which none could learn, but thoſe redeemed

deemed from the earth ; and this can be no other but the worſhip of the inviſible church. But they are not repreſented as ſtanding with the Lamb, in any viſible worſhipping ſociety, wherein that inviſible catholic church with its worſhip is ſhewed forth, according to the ſcriptures. For, though the temple of God, and the altar, and they that worſhip there, be meaſured, during the reign of Antichriſt ; yet then the outer-court is left out, and not meaſured, as being given unto the nations, and trodden under foot of them forty-two months, which is the time of Antichriſt's reign, Rev. xiv. 1. 2. 3. Compare chap. xi. 1. 2.

Therefore, during that reign we are not to look for any ſuch repreſentation of the true church, in any viſible church, as ſhould in all things anſwer to the goſpel-rule ; ſo as neither to exceed, nor fall ſhort of that meaſure : nor are we in that time to look for any ſuch order of a viſible church, as is wholly regulated by the concurring teſtimony of the Lord's two witneſſes, without the wiſdom and teſtimony of man, or the dictates of any ſpirit ſpeaking beſide, or beyond the ſcriptures, or any rule that men walk by, beſide the ſcriptures. But, after the forty-two months, or 1260 days, or time, times, and an half, the ſanctuary is cleanſed, and the daily ſacrifice is reſtored, and the outer-court of the Lord's houſe may be meaſured by the rule of God's word. And then the dragon is found making war with the remnant of the woman's ſeed, that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jeſus. And ſo *the patience of the ſaints*, and *they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jeſus*, are again to be obſerved, as before the man of ſin was revealed.

SECT. IV.

WHen the Lamb takes the ſealed book out of the hand of him that ſat on the throne, to open the ſeals thereof ; we find the whole church of the redeemed emblematically repreſented in the four living creatures, and twenty-four elders brought in, expreſſing their hope of reigning on the earth, in the iſſue of the opening of this book, or of the fulfilling of the things that are written therein. For this is the ſong of the four living creatures, and the twenty-four elders, " Thou art worthy to take " the book, and to open the ſeals thereof : for thou waſt " ſlain,

" ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of " every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and " haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts: and we " ſhall reign on the earth."

If we inquire, what is meant by the ſealed book? we cannot be better ſatisfied as to this, than by obſerving the reference that ſeems to be here to what is ſaid, Dan. viii. 26. and xii. 4. 9. " Shut thou up the viſion, for it is for ma- " ny days.—Shut up the words, and ſeal the book to the " time of the end. Go thy way, Daniel; for the words " are cloſed up and ſealed till the time of the end." If we are to underſtand by the written ſealed book, the hidden counſels of God, and his purpoſes concerning his church under the New Teſtament; then it muſt be thoſe counſels and purpoſes, as expreſſed in the dark prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and ſpecially in the book of Daniel. The things written in this ſealed book could not be laid open, till the time of their accompliſhment, which is the time of the New-teſtament church. So that the events muſt lay open the dark prophecies of the Old Teſtament; and particularly Daniel, according to the illuſtration it receives in the book of the Revelation, which John is forbidden to ſeal, chap. xxii. 10.; for this reaſon, becauſe the time is at hand. As none but the Lamb was worthy to give the dark ſayings of the Old Teſtament that illuſtration they receive in the New-teſtament ſcripture; ſo none but he that redeemed the church was worthy to be ſet, *as head over all things to the church*, over that adminiſtration of providence, whereby all the dark ſayings of the Old Teſtament are exactly accompliſhed, and the book of Daniel particularly fulfilled, according to the illuſtration of it in the book of the Revelation. As this high ſtation required, in the perſon who ſhould fill it, the worth that redeemed the church, and the love manifeſted therein; ſo it required all that wiſdom repreſented by the ſeven eyes of the Lamb, and all the power whereof his ſeven horns are an emblem, to lay open the ſealed book, by the bringing to paſs of all events, according to what is written in the book.

Having thus perceived what is intended by the opening of the ſealed book, and that Daniel's prophecy is peculiarly pointed at here, though the reſt of the prophets are not excluded, who all ſpake, one way or another, of the things as far off as the times of the reſtitution of all things,

Acts

Acts iii. 21. though not perhaps so fully and directly as Daniel. We may next observe, that there is nothing that the prophecy of Daniel declares more clearly and plainly than the reign of the saints, in the conclusion of all their troubles, at the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and after the destruction of the fourth beast with the ten horns, and of the little horn of that beast, that wears out the saints of the Most High, and when the dominion of the rest of the beasts is taken away, Dan. xi. 34. 35. 42. 43. 44. and vii. 11. 12. 13. 14. 25. 26. 27.

It was therefore very proper, when John was seeing the Lamb take the sealed book and open it, to represent to him the church of the redeemed, expressing their joy, in the hope of this reign that should take place in the conclusion of all the dismal events that were to happen by the opening of the seals. And so we find, while the saints were persecuted before the reign of Antichrist, under the opening of the first six seals; though in that period they understood very little of the book of the Revelation; yet then they most firmly believed this reign of the saints, and encouraged themselves under their sufferings on the earth, while they were killed for the word of God, and the testimony which they held, with the hope of reigning on the earth, according to that saying of the Lord, *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*, Matth. v. 5. Compare Psal. xxxvii. 9. 10. 11.

That this was generally believed and hoped for among the first Christians, is manifest from the writings of the primitive fathers. This is not denied by those who account it an error. Yea, they acknowledge it to have begun very early; for they trace the origin of this error as far up as Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, the disciple of this same apostle John that wrote the book of the Revelation. And though they may imagine that they understand the Revelation in this point better than he; yet they must acknowledge, that the most probable account that can be given of the way he came to fall into this error, is, that he took the Revelation, that seems at first view to say the same thing, too literally. Neither can they say this error, that took so early, so universally, among the first Christians, is one of those deviations from the rule of faith, that grew from small beginnings to a height in Antichrist. For the revelation of the man of sin extinguished this opinion, this belief and hope that took place in the churches of the saints, who

were ſuffering for the word of God and the teſtimony of Jeſus. And there was a very good reaſon for the decay of this ſuppoſed error among the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, when they began to ſeparate between Chriſtianity and the croſs, and to ſet up a worldly kingdom to Chriſt.

But no ſooner did the man of ſin begin to be conſumed by the ſpirit of the Lord's mouth, than ſomething like this old opinion began to revive again; yet not as the firſt Chriſtians ſeem to have held it, but more groſs, and with more of an Antichriſtian and Jewiſh air about it. In this falſe dreſs it has been oppoſed under the name of the Milleniarian error. But perhaps the charge of error againſt the modern Millenarians, will not hold againſt the opinion of the firſt Chriſtians. It cannot be proved againſt them, that they expected any reign of the ſaints on earth, before the ſecond coming of Chriſt, or before the coming of the Son of man with the clouds of heaven: no; they expected to be humbled in this world, in conformity to Chriſt in his humiliation; to ſuffer with him in this life, but to reign with him in the life to come, and to appear with him in glory when he appears. It is true they expected to reign a thouſand years on the earth after the coming of Chriſt, and the deſtruction of the kingdoms of this world, and before the reſurrection of the unjuſt, and the particular judgment of every one of the wicked. And no part of the Revelation, nor of the whole New Teſtament, can be ſaid to contradict them in this; unleſs any would imagine, that the times of the reſtitution of all things will not be ſo long as the goſpel-day; or, that when the ſcripture ſpeaks of the laſt day, it leads us to think of a time no longer than as it were a natural day; or, unleſs they ſhould ſuppoſe, that when the ſcripture ſets before us at once a ſhort view of the ſeveral things that are to be done in the times of the reſtitution of all things, theſe things are all to be done at once, and not in the order wherein the book of the Revelation ſays they will come to paſs.

It cannot be ſhown, that the firſt Chriſtians believed, that the ſaints were to reign while the kingdoms of this world were ſtanding. For, according to the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelation, the dominion under the whole heaven is not given to the ſaints of the Moſt High, till the fourth beaſt with the ten horns be deſtroyed, and given to the burning flame; and till the end, when the dominion of the beaſt, and of the little horn, is both conſumed and deſtroyed,

deſtroyed, Dan. vii. 11. 26. 27. or till the beaſt, with the kings of the earth, and their armies, is totally overthrown by Chriſt's coming with the armies of heaven; and till the beaſt and the falſe prophet are caſt alive into the lake of fire burning with brimſtone, Rev. xix. 11. 14. 19. 20. And Daniel ſays, "As for the reſt of the beaſts, their dominion "was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a "ſeaſon and time;" which ſeems to be the ſeaſon and time of the reign of the ſaints, and of Chriſt, over all people.

So far were the firſt Chriſtians from imagining, that in any one time that can be thought of before Chriſt's coming, the Chriſtians of that time ſhould bear ſway in the kingdoms of this world, or that the goſpel, with the concurring power of the kings of the earth, ſhould bring every nation under a right form of Chriſtianity; that they believed, it was not the ſaints living in one ſeaſon and time only, but all the redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and that it is not the dominion of any profeſſion, or ſet of profeſſors living this mortal life, but the reign of the elect only, the redeemed, and none elſe; and theſe alive again from the dead, all partaking of that firſt reſurrection, over the partakers of which the ſecond death hath no power. They did not imagine ſuch a reign to the ſaints on the earth, as the Jews of old imagined to the Meſſiah, who thought of an earthly reign to him in this life, and did not dream that he was to be a humble ſufferer in this life, and to riſe from the dead and reign. The firſt Chriſtians looked for a reign of ſaints raiſed from the dead, and for a heavenly reign on the earth, of all the ſaints that had been firſt humbled in this life; in conformity to Chriſt, who firſt ſuffered, and then entered into his glory. But, at the ſame time, it muſt be owned, that ſome of them imagined an earthly paradiſe; as to which, and the city, they indulged their fancy too much.

The book of the Revelation ſeems plainly to ſay the ſame thing that the firſt Chriſtians believed and hoped for. But this is an objection againſt it: That it is not the manner of the book of the Revelation to declare things that are to come to paſs ſo plainly; and for this very reaſon, that this opinion goes upon a literal interpretation of a part of this myſtical book, it ought to be rejected. Yet it cannot be rejected on this account, if we conſider, that this ſame thing was ſaid the moſt clearly of any thing that is ſaid in the book of Daniel, when the viſion of the beaſts, and of the

kingdom of the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, is explained to him, chap. vii. 16. 26. 27. and the book of the Revelation declares as plainly the manner and ſeaſon of it, as the book of Daniel declared the thing itſelf. We muſt likewiſe bear in mind, that the reaſon why the book of the Revelation is for moſt part myſtical, is, becauſe it was to be fulfilled by men profeſſing Chriſtianity, and the belief of the ſcriptures; even as the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, touching what ſhould happen at the firſt coming of the Meſſiah, were to be fulfilled by the Jews that profeſſed to believe the Old Teſtament; and this could not have been, if the things had been plainly declared without any figure, in the very manner wherein they happened. But this part of the Revelation is to be fulfilled, not by the hand of men profeſſing Chriſtianity, but the Lord's immediate hand, or by the Lord himſelf coming with the hoſts of heaven. We muſt alſo reflect, that while the ſufferings of the ſaints, in conformity to the ſlain Lamb, are clearly foretold, and their humiliation plainly declared in the book of the Revelation; it was very proper, that their hope of reigning on the earth ſhould be as plainly declared, to encourage them under their ſufferings.

All theſe things conſidered, we may ſee, that there is no reaſon for rejecting this ſenſe of the prophecy, becauſe it is too literal; eſpecially if we take notice, that they who even go beyond myſticiſm itſelf in explaining the firſt part of the 20th chapter of the Revelation, explain the latter part of that ſame chapter, from the 11th verſe to the end, as literally as the firſt Chriſtians did the firſt part of that chapter. Only they pretend to find the ſecond coming of Chriſt in the 11th and 12th verſes of that chapter, which ſpeak of Chriſt ſet on his throne at the ſecond reſurrection, the reſurrection of the unjuſt, to judge and condemn every particular wicked perſon, after the judgment of Antichriſt, with the kings of the earth, and the judgment of Gog and Magog, is over; but not a word of the coming of Chriſt with all his ſaints from heaven, which was deſcribed before, in the beginning of this whole ſcene, from chap. xix. 11.

But ſtill this opinion of the firſt Chriſtians is liable to this great objection, That, according to that way of underſtanding the 20th chapter of the Revelation, the ſaints in the ſtate of the reſurrection, wherein they are as the heavenly angels, and wherein they are delivered out of all trouble,

trouble, are again expoſed to an attack from people in all quarters of the world, over whom they had ruled a thouſand years; and Satan gets power in a little ſeaſon to deceive the nations Gog and Magog, and to gather them to war againſt the ſaints, not in their mortal humbled ſtate as before, but now immortal and delivered from death; and the nations are deceived by him, to oppoſe the ſaints in their glory: all which is hard to conceive.

But when the Revelation ſays this, it ſays no more but what the prophecy of Ezekiel ſaid before, concerning Gog and Magog, chap. xxxviii. 8. "In the latter years thou ſhalt "come into the land that is brought back from the ſword, "gathered out of many people, againſt the mountains of "Iſrael which have been always waſte: but it is brought "forth out of the nations, and they ſhall dwell ſafely all "of them." And verſe 10. "The ſame time ſhall things "come into thy mind, and thou ſhalt think an evil thought." (Here is Satan deceiving them, and they are deceived; for) ver. 11. "And thou ſhall ſay, I will go up to the land of "unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at reſt, "that dwell ſafely, all of them dwelling without walls, "and neither bars nor gates." See likewiſe ver. 12. 14. 15. 16. And from the latter end of the chapter, compared with Rev. xx. 9. 10. it is manifeſt, that they do not hurt the people gathered out of the nations, and brought back from the ſword, againſt whom they were gathered together; but they are fearfully deſtroyed by the immediate hand of God, who executes glorious and terrible judgments upon them.

As for the power of Satan to influence the world, and ſtir it up againſt the kingdom of Chriſt, and the blindneſs and madneſs of men deceived by him, the text ſhews, that he can go no further than his chain is looſed. And the greater power he ſhews in deceiving and ſtirring up the world againſt the kingdom of Chriſt, the more is the Lord Jeſus glorified, in preſerving and delivering his kingdom, and in the overthrow of Satan, and all that are under his command. Satan had exerted his power to deceive, and carried the matter to the greateſt height againſt the kingdom of Chriſt, in its humbled eſtate, in the affair of Antichriſt. And how much is the glory of the Lord declared in this book, in his work of conſuming and deſtroying Antichriſt? But he was capable yet to deceive the nations more than in the buſineſs of Antichriſt itſelf, and make a greater and more

more bold attempt againſt the kingdom of Chriſt. And it was proper that he ſhould do his utmoſt againſt the woman's ſeed, before his final overthrow, that the glory of the Lord might appear the moſt remarkably in defeating his laſt, his utmoſt, his greateſt attempt. And therefore, whereas he had before only attacked the woman's ſeed in their humbled condition, now he makes his greateſt effort, and ſtirs up his ſeed againſt the ſeed of the woman in their glory.

Now, the Lord declares in that forecited prophecy of Ezekiel, that when he executes judgment in a fearful manner on the people thus gathered together againſt the ſaints, he will therein *magnify* himſelf and *ſanctify* himſelf, Ezek. xxxviii. 16. 22. 23. And chap. xxxix. 21. he ſays, on this ſame ſubject of the overthrow of Gog and Magog, and the devil that deceived them, "I will ſet my glory among "the Heathen, and all the Heathen ſhall ſee my judgment "that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon "them." And ver. 22. "So the houſe of Iſrael ſhall know "that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward."

If it ſeem ſtrange to us, that the whole world, after they had been under the dominion of the ſaints, ſhould be ſo far deceived, and made ſo blind, ſo mad, as to appear againſt the ſaints, in ſuch a manner, after they are raiſed from the dead:

Let us, firſt, conſider Pharaoh and his hoſt, after all the wonders they had ſeen in Egypt, yet purſuing Iſrael into the ſea, when they ſaw the ſea dividing to make a way of eſcape for them, and when they ſaw the pillar of fire interpoſed between them and Iſrael.

Next, let us think on the rebellions of the unbelieving Iſraelites in the wilderneſs againſt Moſes and againſt God, in the face of daily miracles, and the moſt notable appearances of God, and evidences of his commiſſion to Moſes before their eyes, and even at the foot of the mount Sinai.

Further, let us think on the blind rage of the Jews, ſtirred up by Satan againſt their promiſed Meſſiah, notwithſtanding all the manifeſt evidences they had of his being the Son of God before their eyes; when they put him to death, and the people that had been ſometime crying Hoſanna, cried, Crucify him. Conſider the inſtance of Judas, and them that fell to the ground before our Lord, and yet went on againſt him.

Yea,

Yea, we have ſomething near akin to the gathering of the people of Gog and Magog againſt the glorified ſaints, in that ſtrange action of the Jews againſt Stephen, which perhaps may be a figure or emblem of this: *All that ſat in the council, looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as if it had been the face of an angel*, Acts vi. 15. Then his diſcourſe had ſo far the aſcendant over them, and had their conſciences ſo in ſubjection, that it behoved them *to ſtop their ears*, when they *ran upon him with one accord*, chap. vii. 54.—57. As they ſaw a ray of the heavenly glory upon his face, ſo they could not ſuſpect his report, when they beheld him thus *looking up ſtedfaſtly into heaven*, and ſaying, *Behold, I ſee the heavens opened, and the Son of man ſtanding on the right hand of God*, ver. 55. 56. While they were no longer able to withſtand all this evidence for that which they hated, they *ran upon him* whom they ſaw ſo wonderfully countenanced of God, *with one accord, and caſt him out of the city, and ſtoned him.*

Here then we have ſome repreſentation beforehand, of that blind rage againſt the ſaints, wherewith Gog and Magog will be influenced when deceived by Satan, and gathered together againſt the raiſed ſaints. We will not eaſily believe the wickedneſs of our own hearts, till it be drawn forth by ſuitable temptations. All the power of Satan to deceive, in all ages of the world, that has ſerved to diſcover the wickedneſs of man's heart, has not yet been able to draw it all forth to open view, or fully to diſcover that of which the Lord ſays, "It is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked: who can know it?" But as the thouſand years reign will perhaps ſhow how far the wickedneſs of man's heart may be reſtrained, when Satan is bound from tempting, and the ſaints reigning, and having ſuch influence on all the people on earth, as Satan and his angels had before; ſo this laſt deceiving of the people in all quarters of the world, will bring forth the fulleſt proof of the wickedneſs of man's heart, in his open actions on the earth, that ever was, or ever will be, before the ſecrets of mens hearts are laid open, in the judgment of every particular wicked perſon at the ſecond reſurrection. And thus the ſaints will ſee what a change grace has made on them; and the juſtice of God's judgment in condemning men, after the moſt ſpecious appearances they have made in this world, while their wickedneſs has been ſome way reſtrained, will fully appear.

It

It cannot be hard for thoſe to conceive the ſaints remaining on the earth after their reſurrection, who believe that the Lord remained on the earth ſo long after his reſurrection: and what diſparagement is it to his members, to paſs through the ſeveral ſtates that he paſſed through? And though, in the reſurrection, they be as the heavenly angels, and beyond all the enjoyments of this life on the earth; yet this makes them no more incapable to command the world, than the devil, the prince of this world, and his angels, are incapable at preſent to exerciſe the dominion they have on the earth, by their being incapable of the enjoyments that men have of the things of this life on the earth under their dominion.

If it be inquired, How does this book of the Revelation unſeal the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and particularly Daniel on this ſubject, which ſeems to be almoſt plainly ſpoken of by that prophet? we ſhall find, that it was very fit to bring in the church of the redeemed, ſpeaking of the reign on the earth, at the Lamb's taking the book to open the ſeals. For by what is declared in the book of the Revelation, Daniel's prophecy is remarkably laid open on this very point, and as to that ſame thing that Daniel was in the dark about, when he was told *the words are cloſed up and ſealed.*

In that 12th chapter of Daniel, after the queſtion is propoſed, *How long ſhall it be to the end of theſe wonders?* ver. 6. and the anſwer is given in a ſolemn manner, in his hearing, *That for a time, times, and an half*, ver. 7. (which is the time of the ſcattering of the power of the holy people by Antichriſt, and of the giving of the ſaints, or of times and laws into his hands, chap. vii. 25. the ſame that the Revelation ſpeaks of, and calls alſo forty-two months, and 1260 days), Daniel puts the queſtion, *O my Lord, what the end of theſe?* and is told, that the words are cloſed up; only he is told of a further number, than the time, times, and a half; and that is, 1290 days, which is thirty days longer; and this is ſaid to be from the taking away of the *daily* or *continual*, and of the ſetting up the abomination that maketh deſolate, *i. e.* from the time that the outer-court was trodden under foot of the nations, to the time that it ſhall be again fully cleanſed, the beginning of its cleanſing being at the end of the 1260 days. Then he is told of a third number, which is 1335 days, which lengthens out the time 45 days more, or 75 days beyond the 1260 days: and it is ſaid to him,

"Go

" Go thy way till the end; for thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in " thy lot at the end of the days," even the days immediately before mentioned, *viz.* the 1335 days.

The book of the Revelation never mentions theſe two laſt numbers. But, by illuſtrating the firſt number, *the time, times, and an half*, reducing it to days, in conformity to the two laſt numbers, and fixing the beginning of it, and declaring what is the end of theſe; it lays open the whole, and clearly anſwers Daniel's queſtion. And as the events lay open the book; ſo in the end of the time, times, and an half, we have reaſon to think Daniel's ſecret will be open; for the book was cloſed up and ſealed till the time of the end, Dan. xii. 4. And then inquiry is made, How long it ſhall be to the end? and the anſwer is, A time, times, and half, ver. 5. 6. 7. Then Daniel inquires what ſhall be the end? ver. 8. and he is told, that it is cloſed up and ſealed till the time of the end, ver. 9. *i. e.* the end of the time, times, and half.

We read likewiſe of the ſhutting up of the viſion of evening and morning, becauſe it was for many days, chap. viii. 26. Now, the viſion of evening and morning was told, ver. 13. 14. in anſwer to that queſtion, " How long the vi- " ſion, the daily, and the tranſgreſſion of deſolation, to give " both the ſanctuary and the hoſt to be trodden under foot?" And it is ſaid, *Unto evening, morning*, 2300, *i. e.* according to the ſtyle of Moſes in the firſt chapter of Geneſis, 2300 days. Now, reckoning theſe evenings, mornings, or theſe days in the prophetical ſenſe, from the time wherein Daniel had that viſion, the end of them, as was before noticed, falls in with the end of the time, times, and half; and when theſe many days are ended, the viſion is no more ſhut up.

The book of the Revelation fixes the beginning of the time, times, and half, as was before obſerved, and explains them. It explains Daniel's fourth beaſt with the ten horns, points out the beginning of the kingdoms repreſented by the ten horns, at the wounding to death of the ſeventh head of that beaſt, and makes this the beginning of the time, times, and half. It makes the time, times, and half, to be forty-two months, which is three years and a half; and makes this to be 1260 days; and ſo makes it run on a foot with the other numbers of Daniel, which are numbers of days. According to the beginning that the Revelation fixes for the 1260 days, the end of them, as was ſaid, falls in

with the end of the 2300 days, counting them from the telling of that vision, or counting these many days from the time of shutting up the vision.

Thus, by the book of the Revelation, and the event together, we find the end of the time, times, and half, with the end of the 2300 days, evening, morning, which number goes a little further than the time, times, and half, and goes in so far with the 1290 days. And this time, wherein the end of the 2300 days falls, is declared in Daniel to be the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, that was before trodden under foot, Dan. viii. 13. 14. And in the time of the end of time, times, and half, it is said, "Many shall run "to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," Dan. xii. 4. "And many shall be purified and made white and tried: "but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked "shall understand, but the wise shall understand," Dan. xii. 10. Thus we understand what takes up the thirty days more than 1260, which makes up 1290. For the end of the 2300 days falling in that time, makes that the time when the sanctuary is cleansed; and by reckoning from thence, the 45 days which carry up the number to 1335 days, we come to know the end of all Daniel's numbers.

But what does the stating the beginning of the time, times, and half, and knowing the end of it, signify as to the point of the reign of the saints? Answer, It signifies very much. For the end of the time, times, and half, or 1260 days, is the end of Antichrist's scattering the power (or the hands) of the holy people; and numbering as many days from thence as carry 1260 to 1290, we have the length of that season, wherein their power that was scattered is restored, and the outer-court, or visible representation of the Lord's house or true church, is cleansed, and restored to the holy people, while the wicked are doing wickedly. And, numbering as many days from thence, as carry the number 1290 up to 1335, we come to the very time of the reign of the saints, which Daniel could not know; yea, and which could not be known till God gave to Jesus Christ the Revelation, which he sent and signified by his angel to his servant John; or till the Lamb that was slain, being alive again from the dead, took the sealed book, and opened the seals: nor indeed could it be perceived by us till the end of the time, times and a half.

But even yet, the precise day or year, and time of the year, cannot be declared, till the event declare it. Yet, that

that the end of the 1335 days, reckoned from the beginning of the time, times, and half, is the time of Chriſt's ſecond coming, and the beginning of the ſaints reign, is manifeſt from what is ſaid to Daniel of the end of theſe 1335 days: *Go thy way till the end: for thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in thy lot at the end of the days.*

When theſe 1335 days are ſpoke of in Daniel, it is ſaid, *Bleſſed is he that waiteth and cometh to them.* And the Revelation declares what this bleſſedneſs is, when it is ſaid, Rev. xx. 6. "Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the "firſt reſurrection; on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power; "but they ſhall be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall "reign with him a thouſand years." And this text, at the ſame time that it declares the bleſſedneſs that Daniel ſpoke of, likewiſe declares the fulfilment of that which is repreſented as the hope of the redeemed, when the Lamb took the ſealed book to open it, Rev. v. 9. 10.

Whereas Daniel ſpeaks of the reſurrection, or awaking of them that ſleep in the duſt, ſome to everlaſting life, and (then) ſome to everlaſting ſhame and contempt; the Revelation declares the reſurrection of them that awake to everlaſting life, and calls it the firſt reſurrection, over the partakers whereof the ſecond death hath no power; and places it a thouſand years before the reſurrection that Daniel ſpoke of, in the next place, (even the reſurrection of them whoſe names are not found written in the book), unto condemnation and the ſecond death.

And whereas Daniel ſpoke of a time of great trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a nation, and of the deliverance of every one found written in the book, in that time when Michael the great prince that ſtandeth for the children of Iſrael ſhall ſtand up; the Revelation declares all this trouble and deliverance, in theſe ſeveral inſtances.

1. In the execution of judgment on Antichriſt at the coming of Chriſt, chap. xix. from ver. 2. to the end. And in this time the ſaints are delivered, gathered out of the nations, and brought back from the ſword, *i. e.* raiſed from the dead, and gathered unto Chriſt, to reign with him a thouſand years on the earth.

2. In the yet more fearful and univerſal execution of judgment on Gog and Magog, and their company, whoſe number is as the ſand of the ſea; and this in the end of the thouſand years, which gives the finiſhing ſtroke to Satan,

and completes the victory of the saints, or of them that are written in the book, over him, chap. xx. 7. 8. 9. 10.

3. In the execution of judgment on every one of the wicked at the second resurrection, when the heavens and earth fly away from his face that sits on the throne of judgment. And then they that are found written in the book of life, in this third and most fearful period of trouble, shall be most highly exalted, sitting with him in the judgment, before whose face the heavens and the earth fly away. And, in the issue of that trouble, they shall with him possess the restored creation, the new heavens and new earth, after they are dissolved and changed, and suited unto the second Adam, the heavenly man, and them that are joint heirs with him, as they were at first suited unto the first Adam, the earthly man, chap. xx. from the 2d verse to the end, and chap. xxi. from the beginning to ver. 6.

Thus the Revelation opens Daniel's sealed book, and declares the times of the restitution of all things; of which God had spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began. So we see the church rises by several steps unto that glory that is designed for her; and she rises upon the ruin of the wicked. Antichrist is destroyed at the beginning of the thousand years reign, and this is but the first step of the exaltation of the church. Gog and Magog, and their company, with Satan that deceived them, are destroyed next; and so the church is exalted with Christ in judging the dead. Then the wicked are all cast into the lake of fire; and the church is exalted to possess and reign over the new creation, according to the hope that is declared, Rom. viii. 7.—23.

Thus the kingdom of the saints does not end with the thousand years, which is but the beginning of it, but *it shall stand for ever*, as Daniel said. And who that indeed believes this, would not count all things loss to know Christ, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if they might attain to that first resurrection? And seeing this thousand years reign, that follows upon the destruction of Antichrist, is especially set before us, as a hope to encourage us against receiving the mark of the beast; how jealous should this make us of every thing like that mark, whatever advantages it may be attended with in this world? lest, by receiving it, or keeping it, we lose our part in the first resurrection. And however we may brought under in the world, by standing at the strictest distance from the

the mark of the beaſt, or by keeping the commandments of God, and teſtimony of Jeſus, in oppoſition to the commandments and teſtimony of men; yet, if we have patience in ſuffering a while with the Lamb, we ſhall reign with him when Antichriſt is deſtroyed, and the beaſt given to the burning flame.

The

The VISION of the SEALED BOOK, conſidered in a Series of five Letters.

[Never before printed.]

LETTER I.

SIR, *Auguſt* 16. 1734.

IN the account we have of the ſealed book, Rev. v. there is a plain reference to Daniel, chap. viii. 26. and chap. xii. 4. 9. The reaſon why it is ſealed in Daniel, is, becauſe it was not yet to be fulfilled, and ſo could not be underſtood till the time of the accompliſhment; but in the Revelation, chap. xxii. 10. the viſion is not ſealed, for this reaſon, *Becauſe the time is at hand.* The opening of the ſeals, then, is the bringing to paſs of the events foretold in the dark prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and eſpecially of Daniel, ſo as to fulfil the prophecies exactly. This is the proper work of Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator of the new covenant, the head of the church, and head over all things unto it; who is ſet forth under the emblem of a lamb, in oppoſition to Antichriſt, whoſe emblem is a deſtroying beaſt. The uſe of the Revelation is to direct us into the underſtanding of the book that was ſealed, by the events which open it up to us; and this it doth by references to the Old Teſtament, and eſpecially to Daniel's viſions; ſo that by comparing it with theſe and the events, we may certainly know that theſe are the events foretold in the Old Teſtament, and in Daniel: otherwiſe the Revelation is fully as dark as Daniel, or any other prophecy of the Old Teſtament.

Where the ſhutting up or ſealing of the viſion is mentioned in Daniel, there we have ſeveral numbers of time ſet down, as chap. viii. 2300 days, chap. xii. 1290 days, and 1335 days. But Daniel was moſt concerned to know the meaning of the *time, times, and the dividing of time*, mentioned chap. vii. 25. and again chap. xii. 7. upon which he ſays, "I heard, but I underſtood not; then ſaid I, "O my Lord, what the end of theſe? And he ſaid, Go "thy way, Daniel: for the words are cloſed up and ſeal-"ed till the time of the end," *i. e.* till the end of the time, times, and an half. The book of the Revelation

ſpeaks

ſpeaks not of any of the reſt of the numbers but this, and directs us to the underſtanding of it by reducing it to days, and ſo ſetting it on a footing with the reſt of the numbers: for it makes the time, times, and an half, forty-two months, or three years and an half, and makes that 1260 days: and then by pointing to the beginning of theſe days, Rev. xiii. 3. 4. 5. and xvii. 12. lets us know the end of them. And if the end of them coincide with the end of Daniel's 2300 days, counted from the time wherein Daniel had that viſion, chap. viii. and the 1290 days be made up by adding 30 to 1260, and the 1335 days be made up by adding 45 to 1290; then we ſee there was no need to explain any other number in Daniel, but the time, times, and an half; and the direction the Revelation gives as to it, explains the whole. If it can appear from the Revelation, that the time, times, and an half, or forty-two months, or 1260 days, each day for a year, (according to prophetic ſtyle, Ezek. iv. 6.), began in the fifth century, when the beaſt with the ſeven heads, the Roman empire, was wounded to death in the ſeventh head, and when the ten horns or kings received power in it as kings; then the end of time, times, and an half, muſt be in this century that is now running, and that before the middle of it. This time then is the time of the end, when that which was a great ſecret, and hid from Daniel, muſt be underſtood.

I have given this as an inſtance of the manner wherein the book of the Revelation opens the prophecies of the Old Teſtament; by which we may ſee, that, however dark the Revelation ſeems at firſt view, it may well be called a revelation, with reſpect to the explication of the dark prophecies of the Old Teſtament, by the events.

The book is ſealed with ſeven ſeals, under which are comprehended all the events foretold in the Old Teſtament, and eſpecially Daniel, which come to paſs ſucceſſively according to the order of the opening of the ſeals, from the firſt erection of the Chriſtian church, unto the end of the world. The ſeventh ſeal comprehends under it ſeven trumpets ſucceeding one another, according to the ſucceſſion of events. The fifth trumpet brings the firſt wo, which is the kingdom of Antichriſt. The ſixth trumpet brings the ſecond wo, which is the Mahometan powers. And the ſeventh trumpet brings the third wo, which is the ruin of both the former; as appears by comparing the firſt ſix trumpets and the firſt ſix vials. Then the ſeventh vial completes

pletes the deſtruction of the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, and finiſhes the myſtery of God. The ſeventh trumpet brings the end of time by ſeveral ſteps, repreſented by the pouring out of vials, one after another ſucceſſively, according to the ſucceſſion of the events; and upon pouring out of the laſt of them, we are told, *It is done.* In the ſeven trumpets, by the laſt of which the enemies of the church are deſtroyed, and the ſaints brought to their reſt and their kingdom, there may be a reference to Joſhua, chap. vi. And in the pouring out of the wrath of God, by the vials, under the ſeventh trumpet, on the enemies of the church, there may be a reference to Pſal. lxxv. and Zeph. iii. 8. However, theſe are the heads to which every thing in the book of the Revelation muſt be referred; and the firſt trumpet ſucceeds the ſixth ſeal, as likewiſe the firſt vial ſucceeds the ſixth trumpet, making a continual ſucceſſion of events from the beginning to the end; all connected, and making up the one complete viſion of the ſealed book. From this main viſion we muſt diſtinguiſh the incidental particular viſions that are explanatory; and every thing in them belongs to one part or other of the main viſion to which it is to be referred.

It is likewiſe to be remarked as to the main viſion, that though it goes in a continued ſucceſſion from the firſt ſeal to the laſt vial, which is under the ſeventh ſeal and under the ſeventh trumpet; yet there is a remarkable turn in the courſe of things, at the beginning of the ſeals, and of the trumpets, and of the vials. Thus we find the things that happen under the firſt ſix ſeals, iſſuing in the demoliſhing of a world, chap. vi. And by the trumpets, again, we find another world waſted or defaced, chap. viii.; and another world is conſumed and deſtroyed by the vials. An earthquake always denotes a great change in the ſtate of things. And we find an earthquake under the ſixth ſeal, another at the opening of the ſeventh, and beginning of the trumpets; another at the end of the ſixth trumpet, and as an introduction to the ſeventh; and the greateſt of all under the ſeventh vial. We may alſo take notice, that of all the ſeals the ſeventh is the moſt remarkable, and by far moſt comprehenſive. For the firſt ſix ſeals carry us no further than the beginning of the fourth century; but the ſeventh comprehends the whole time from thence to the end of the world; ſo is the ſeventh trumpet the moſt remarkable

remarkable of all the trumpets, and the ſeventh vial is the moſt notable and comprehenſive vial.

The firſt ſix ſeals take up the time from the firſt publication of the goſpel in the world, unto the demoliſhing of Heatheniſm in the Roman empire, which was about the beginning of the fourth century.

Seal I. chap. vi. 1. 2. Here is repreſented the glorious ſucceſs of the goſpel, and the erection of the kingdom of Chriſt thereby, when it began to be publiſhed throughout the world, by the preaching of the apoſtles, and people of all nations were by his glorious power brought in ſubjection to him. Here ſeems to be a reference to Gen. xlix. 24. 26. and Pſal. xlv. 4. 5. There is another publication of the goſpel pointed at in the reſurrection of the witneſſes, in the concluſion of the ſixth trumpet, chap. xi. The ſame thing is repreſented, chap. x. 10. 11. where it is ſignified, that the apoſtles who had preached or propheſied at firſt by word of mouth, ſhould propheſy a ſecond time to the nations by the little book, even the book that was written by them, the New Teſtament, when it ſhould be tranſlated into the languages of the nations; and that it ſhould have ſuch like effect on them who would embrace it, as the eating of that book in the viſion had upon John. The ſame thing is alſo declared, chap. xiv. 6. 7. as the cauſe of the fall of Babylon; for this is the deſign of the ſecond publication of the goſpel by the book, even the conſuming of the man of ſin till he be deſtroyed. For he is conſumed by the ſpirit of the Lord's mouth, or by the power of his word. But we have the firſt publication of the goſpel at the opening of the firſt ſeal, as far excelling the ſecond as the building of the firſt temple by Solomon exceeded the ſecond building.

At the opening of the firſt ſeal, the firſt face in the cherubim, the face of the lion, cries, "Come and ſee." The lion is the hieroglyphic of light, which is the emblem of the Son of God, the Sun of righteouſneſs, the light of the world, who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah in the foregoing chapter; and he appeared remarkably as that lion, and as the light of the world, in that firſt publication of the goſpel.

Seal II. ver. 3. 4. Here is repreſented the breach of peace among them that had joined together againſt Chriſt and his goſpel, even the Jews and the Romans; and the terrible overthrow of the Jews, by their ſtrange diviſions among themſelves, and by the Roman armies; and this as the

righteous judgment of God upon them for their employing the Roman power against Christ and the gospel. This work of the Father's zeal for the kingdom of his Son against the oppofers of it, followed hard upon the first publication of the gospel.

At the opening of this seal, the second face in the cherubim, cries, "Come and see." And that is the face of a calf or ox, the hieroglyphic of fire sending forth rays of light. As the head of the calf or ox sends forth horns, and as the Son, the light of the world, is called the horn of our salvation, whom the Father hath raised up; so fire is the emblem of the Father in scripture, *a jealous God, a consuming fire*. And such he appeared at the opening of this second seal.

In this second seal there may be a reference to Zech. i. 8. Is. lvii. 19. 20. 21. Deut. xxxii. 41. 42. Amos ix. 8. 10. 11. And this is what was foretold by Daniel, chap. ix. 26. 27.

Seal III. ver. 5. 6. The opening of this seal produces scarcity; spiritual famine, like that spoken of by Amos, chap. viii. 11. And here we have merchandise in that whereof there is a scarcity: *A measure* (*i. e.* very little more than one English wine-quart) *of wheat for a penny*, (seven pence halfpenny), *and three measures of barley for a penny*; *and see thou deal not unjustly with the oil and the wine*. If the wheat and barley, oil and wine be the word of God, and the comforts of the gospel, and the scarcity of this signify a failure of that growth and multiplication of the word of God that was at first, and a scarcity of the fruits of the gospel among Christians; then this merchandise must be spiritual merchandise in a bad sense, *i. e.* the making a gain of the gospel, and endeavouring to make an interest in this life out of the gospel, contrary to the Lord's command of self-denial. Peter foretold this merchandise, 2 Pet. ii. 3. The first preachers of the gospel counted all loss for Christ, and counted not their lives dear in the fulfilling of their ministry; but even in their day they took notice of some that served their own temporal interest, by the gospel which they perverted, to shun the cross, minding earthly things. Yea and Paul complains of most part of his companions in travel, that they sought their own things, not the things of Christ. John speaks of a Diotrephes in one of the churches, who loved to have the preheminence; and Paul takes notice of the beginning of the

the working of the mystery of iniquity in his time, which he says would come to a height, when the let was taken out of the way. Much more, after the Jews, the first enemies of the gospel, were broken, and all the apostles removed by death, did the mystery of iniquity work in the churches, especially among the ministers of the word. They began then more remarkably to make a gain of the gospel, and to seek to exalt themselves and their own worldly interest by it, and so became spiritual merchants, making their own advantage of the souls of men by the gospel. This came to a great head at last in the Antichristian church, or Babylon, in the 18th chapter. It is therefore the beginning of the corruption of Christianity after the days of the apostles that is intended in this seal.

At the opening of this seal, the third face in the cherubim cries, "Come and see;" and that is the face of the man. The fourth chapter of the Revelation does no more but refer to the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel, where we have the only full description of the appearance of the cherubim, that is to be found in the whole Bible. John, who had a vision of a temple, saw the same thing in it that Ezekiel saw, and refers to his description. Now, the likeness of the cherubim in Ezekiel, was the likeness of a man, with a man's face; and three other faces, joined to the man's face upon the appearance of a man. The Revelation tells us what this likeness of a man signifies, when it sets before us the cherubim singing this song, *Thou hast redeemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* It is therefore the church reconciled to God by the death of his Son, as one body, one new man, that is mainly intended in the cherubim; and the union of the church with the three divine persons by Jesus Christ, is shewed forth by the joining of three faces to the face of a man upon the likeness of a man. So every church of the saints, wherein the catholic church is shewed forth, is said to be *in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Ezekiel speaks of Antichrist as an apostate church, when he calls him the anointed cherub that covereth, and that was set by God upon his holy mountain, and was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created, till iniquity was found in him, and he sinned by the multitude of his merchandise, and was filled with violence; and the Lord declares, that he will cast this cherub as profane out of the mountain of God, and destroy him who defiled his

sanctuary by the iniquity of his traffic. It is true, the prophet is there speaking of the king of Tyre, who is there a type of Antichrist in pride, wicked wisdom, and the iniquity of traffic. For that it is not merely the king of Tyre that is there intended, is manifest from those things being said of him, that were never applicable to the king of Tyre, and applicable only to Antichrist, who was, in the foresaid things, typified by that Heathen king.

Now, when the third seal is opened, that merchandise and traffic through which the cherub, the church, was corrupted, and by which iniquity was found in it, is set forth. And unto this the face of a man in the cherub cries, "Come and see." Compare Ezek. xxvii. and xxviii. and chap. xxvi. from ver. 15. with Rev. xviii. and xi. 2. and 2 Thess. ii. 4. and with this the second seal.

Seal IV. ver 7. 8. Death with hell following is not mere natural death; nor can it be the death of them that were slain for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus: for hell follows with it to them that are here killed. But it seems to be spiritual death or apostasy. And men were thus killed, *1st*, With the sword. Persecution is one cause of apostasy, and there were many that apostatised under the Heathen persecutions. Or the sword may be here the sword that proceedeth out of the mouth of him that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, wherewith he threatens to fight against those with whom he found fault, chap. ii. 16. *2dly*, With hunger; through the foresaid famine of the word of God, and scarcity of the fruits of it, and through the foresaid merchandise. *3dly*, And with death; the giving them up to the lusts of their hearts, the lusts of this world: for to be carnally minded is death; and they that live in pleasure, are dead while they live. *4thly*, And with the beasts of the earth; false teachers, of whom Paul said to the Ephesian elders, "I know that after my departing "shall grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock."

At the opening of this seal, the fourth face in the cherubim, says, "Come and see;" and that is the face of the eagle. The eagle is the hieroglyphic of air or wind, which is the emblem of the Holy Ghost, who has the same name with air in the Hebrew language, and is compared to the wind blowing where it listeth, John iii. and came on the disciples on the day of Pentecost with a mighty rushing wind. He descended on our Lord at his baptism in the likeness of a winged creature, a dove. And the eagle is his hieroglyphic

hieroglyphic in the Old Testament, as we may see by comparing the original text, Gen. i. 2. and Deut. xxxii. 11. That which came to pass under this seal is the greatest opposition unto the Spirit of God, and is the effect of hardening them judicially, and giving over striving with them who have always resisted him. For, because they received not the love of the truth, he sent them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Seal V. ver. 9. 10. 11. As the issue of receiving the truth without the love thereof, or of hypocrisy in the Christian profession, among the Christians of the first ages, appeared by the foregoing seals; so, by the opening of this seal, we have set before us the end of that faith which is to the saving of the soul, among the Christians under the Heathenish persecutions. The last persecution of the church by Rome Heathen under Diocletian was by far the greatest of all; and so the book of the Revelation takes notice of the sufferers under Heathenism, about the time when they were fulfilled; even as the things pointed at under the two foregoing seals, had some beginnings in the very time of the apostles, but they are pointed at in this prophecy as they came to a height. And that cry of the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, *How long dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?* seems to import, that these sufferings had begun long before, and were now come to a height. By the answer to the cry of the souls of them that were slain in the Heathenish persecution, it appears, that when these sufferings were fulfilled, the sufferings of Christ's people on the earth were not at an end, and that sufferings are to be measured out to the saints till the day of judgment, when all their blood will be fully avenged; and when the measure of all the sufferings of the whole kingdom of Christ, the whole family of God, is filled up, then that day of vengeance will be no longer delayed.

We find those that were slain for God's word and the testimony of Jesus (the same that are here spoken of), together with their brethren and fellow-servants that succeeded them under the reign of Antichrist, and all who worshipped not the beast nor his image, nor received his mark, all rising and reigning together, after the destruction of that power that persecuted them, chap. xx. 4. The sufferers here spoke of before the rise and reign of Antichrist, are also the same that are spoke of, chap. xii. 11. While the Christians under

der Antichriſt are repreſented by the woman in the wilderneſs, and the remnant of her ſeed, that keep God's commands, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, againſt whom the dragon makes war till the end of the world.

Seal VI. ver. 12.—17. Here, in anſwer to the cry of the ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, we have vengeance executed for them, in the bringing down of the Heatheniſh power of the Roman empire, and the fall of the ſixth head of that dreadful beaſt; wherein there is a pledge, an earneſt, and type of the final deſtruction of all perſecuting power in that great day of vengeance that is promiſed. And therefore the bringing down of Heatheniſm in the empire, with the main ſupports of it, is ſpoken of in terms that ſeem proper to the great day of judgment. For it cannot be that great day that is intended in the ſixth ſeal: becauſe it falls out under the ſeventh ſeal not yet opened, and it follows the blowing of ſeven trumpets ſucceſſively; and when it comes by the ſeventh trumpet, ſix vials are ſucceſſively poured out, and it is the ſeventh that brings it.

The bringing down of the Heatheniſh religion in the empire, and of Heatheniſh perſecuting power, is ſet forth under the notion of the deſtruction of a world, in language borrowed from the prophets of the Old Teſtament, as from Iſ. xxxiv. 4. and chap. ii. 19. The great earthquake, or terrible ſhaking of the earth, ſignifies a great change in the ſtate of things: and this is the ſignification of an earthquake throughout the book of the Revelation. The ſun that was made for the dominion of the day, and the moon and ſtars for dominion in the night, always ſignify in this book dominion and government, or governors and ruling powers. And the ſun in the empire muſt be the chief ruler, of which there were more than one ſupporting Heatheniſm, when it fell down from being the religion of the empire. Therefore it is ſaid, the kings of the earth fought to be hid from the wrath of the Lamb.

This fall of Heatheniſm, and the overthrow of the Heatheniſh power of the empire, whereby the church had been perſecuted, is again pointed out in the hiſtory of the woman, chap. xii. where it is repreſented as the iſſue of a battle between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels; and is ſet forth under the notion of the dragon's being caſt down from heaven to the earth, *i. e.* from the high ſtation wherein he at firſt fought againſt the church.

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But being brought down from that ſtation, he went to work another way, wherein he yet did more miſchief to the woman in the buſineſs of Antichriſt; and this belongs to the ſeventh ſeal.

But it may be inquired, when ſix of the ſeals are opened, and but one remains, what appears in the opening of theſe ſix ſeals, that ſerves to unlock the ſhut-up viſion, and unſeal the ſealed prophecy of Daniel, or any other prophet of the Old Teſtament?

To which we may anſwer, 1. As the things that come to paſs at the opening of the ſix ſeals, were under Daniel's fourth beaſt or fourth kingdom, chap. vii. which can be no other but the Roman empire; ſo there are ſome things ſpoken of by Daniel in his prophecy fulfilled in them, as chap. ix. 26. 27. by the opening of the firſt and ſecond ſeals; and in the account of things that fall out by the opening of the ſix ſeals, there are ſeveral references to the prophets.

2. The opening of theſe ſix ſeals made way for the coming up of Antichriſt and the ten kingdoms in Daniel's fourth kingdom, which is the Roman empire; and the time, times, and a half, are the time of the reign of Antichriſt by the power of the ten kings in that fourth kingdom; ſo the ſeal under which this great thing in Daniel was cloſed up, could not be opened without opening the ſix ſeals firſt, which one after another all made way for it; and the kingdom of the ſaints after the time, times, and a half, could not take place till after theſe were fulfilled. Before Antichriſt could come up and reign over the empire, it behoved the goſpel of Chriſt firſt to be publiſhed through that empire, and a profeſſion of Chriſtianity, or of ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt, to take place in ſeveral places of that empire: for it behoved Antichriſt to ſit in the temple of God, and be in the outer-court of God's houſe, as well as rule in the empire; and it behoved him to ſpring out of the churches of the ſaints, where the myſtery of iniquity was to begin to work. Now, the goſpel of Chriſt was preached, and a profeſſion of ſubjection to Chriſt raiſed throughout the empire by the opening of the firſt ſeal.

Next, if the Jewiſh church and nation had ſtood and remained as it was when the goſpel was firſt publiſhed, that had been the only proper ſeat of Antichriſt, and would have had a vaſt advantage over any form of religion that could have been oppoſed to Chriſt. But this was taken away by the power of that empire, wherein Antichriſt was to riſe according

according to Daniel; and this by the opening of the second seal.

Further, Antichrist could not take place, by virtue of the Christian profession, till the gospel was many ways perverted, and the profession of Christianity corrupted, by the pride, fleshly wisdom, and spiritual merchandise of the leaders of the churches especially, and by false teachers. It behoved the mystery of iniquity to work in the churches before the man of sin was brought forth; but this was done by the opening of the third and fourth seals.

Lastly, Antichrist could not arise to his kingdom in the empire, till the measure of the churches sufferings from the sixth head, or the Heathenish power in that empire was filled up, and till Heathenism was no more the religion of that empire. Now, this was done by the opening of the fifth and sixth seals. And when the empire got on a form of Christianity suited to such a body, as we may see at the beginning of the trumpets, then it was a fit kingdom for Antichrist, of whom Daniel speaks, and numbers his reign.

Supposing the vision of the seven candlesticks or churches to be prophetic, it may be inquired, which of the churches do the first six seals answer to? To this it may be replied, that the church of Ephesus answers to the time of the first four seals. The Ephesian church in its first and best state suits the time of the two first seals, and its latter and backsliding state represents the time of the third and fourth seals. And the fifth seal agrees to Symrna, and perhaps somewhat of the fourth. —— *I am, &c.*

LETTER II.

SIR, *September* 4. 1734.

I Said in my last, that the opening of the first six seals made way for the opening of the seventh, which is the main seal. Before it is opened, we have a preface in the 7th chapter, which serves for the encouragement of the people of God against all the evil that was to come to pass under it.

The fall of Heathenism, and the power that supported it in the empire, was attended with an evil that served very much to the hurt of the profession of Christianity in the world; and that was the holding of the four winds, which, by comparing Ezek. xxxvii. 9. 14. John iii. 8. Acts ii. 2.

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1 Cor. xii. 3. we may take to signify the with-holding of the spiritual influences that give life to the Christian profession, and without which it can be nothing else but a form of godliness, denying the power of it. And by comparing Rev. vii. 1. 2. 3. with chap. viii. 7. and chap. ix. 4. we may perceive that this holding of the winds hath, as its consequence, that great evil, which took place by the first trumpet, and came to its height by the fifth.

Against this desolation that was to come on the outward state of Christianity in the world, the servants of God have some comfort, in that which is said of their being sealed. And in this there is a reference to Ezek. ix. where we see, when the Lord is about to bring evil on Jerusalem, for the abominations done in the midst thereof, there is a mark set on the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for these abominations. It was a temporal destruction, from which those that were marked were preserved in the common calamity of the captivity, as would seem from Jer. xxxix. 18. and xlv. 5. But that was a type of the eternal destruction that came on the professors of Christianity by the New-testament captivity, or by Antichrist. The apostle foretells the coming of the man of sin, 2 Thess. ii. as a dreadful judgment from God upon the professors of Christianity, when he says, —— "Whose coming is with all deceiveable-"ness of unrighteousness, in them that perish; because they "received not the love of the truth that they might be "saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong de-"lusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might "be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure "in unrighteousness." The servants of God are sealed, to distinguish them from those that received not the love of the truth, but took pleasure in unrighteousness; and to secure and preserve them from this damnation, in the common calamity that was coming on the profession or outward state of Christianity in the world. Therefore the apostle says of them that have no pleasure in that unrighteousness, but groan under it, as in Ezekiel, —"But God hath from "the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctifi-"cation of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." And such are they who are here sealed; called the servants of God, in opposition to those whose consciences are subject to the doctrines and commandments of men, that give them ease in the service of their lusts, wherein they take pleasure.

We must notice here the number of those that are sealed,

144,000, which we see made up here by multiplying 12,000 by 12, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. As the Old-testament church sprang from the twelve patriarchs, with respect to whom Rachel and Leah that bare them, are said to build the house of Israel, Ruth iv. 11.; so the new Jerusalem has twelve foundations of its wall, whereon are written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, Rev. xxi. 14. Thus the number twelve is much used in the description of the new Jerusalem, sometimes with, and often without the adjection of thousands. It had twelve gates, at which were twelve angels, with the names of the twelve tribes written on the gates. Its wall had twelve foundations, as has been said. The tree of life bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded fruit every month. And the measure of the whole city with the reed, was 12,000 furlongs. It seems to be for the sake of the number twelve, that Ezekiel's cubits, chap. xlviii. 35. are brought to furlongs. And if Ezekiel's measures of cubits come to the same with John's measures of furlongs, it will be an evidence, that John was under a wiser direction than his own in describing the new Jerusalem. We find likwise the number 144, which arises from twelve as its square root, mentioned in the description of the New Jerusalem, without the adjection of thousands; as where it is said, he measured the wall thereof 144 cubits; and this is the wall that stood on the twelve foundations, on which the names of the twelve apostles were writ. The reason of the adjection of the thousands to the numbers 12 and 144 in the numbering of the followers of the Lamb, from the coming of Antichrist, to the time of his final destruction, seems to be to denote a great multitude, a certain number being put for an uncertain; and therefore we find, that sealed company represented as a great multitude which no man could number. But the number twelve is insisted on, Rev. chap. vii. and xxi. with a plain enough reference to the twelve patriarchs, of whom the twelve tribes of typical Israel, the Old-testament church, sprang, and to the twelve apostles of the Lamb, on whose doctrine the New-testament church is built. And the number 144 seems to be insisted on for no other reason, but because it arises from twelve multiplied by itself, or hath twelve precisely for its square root; whereby we are taught, that the true church of Christ, in opposition to Antichrist's company, is wholly founded in the doctrine of the twelve apostles, and depends every way upon it; and that the adjected thousands are no

further

further uſeful in the deſcription of the Lamb's company, than has been ſaid. But that the number 144 is chiefly to be attended to, would ſeem from the oppoſition wherein it is ſtated to the number of the beaſt, which is mentioned without any adjected thouſands, Rev. xiii. 18. and xiv. 1. The beaſt and the Lamb are oppoſed; ſo is the mark of the beaſt oppoſed to the Lamb's Father's name, written on the foreheads of the Lamb's company; and the name of the beaſt to the name that is on the Lamb's company. And ſo likewiſe the number of the beaſt, 666, and the number of the Lamb, 144, are oppoſed. As the Lamb's number is mentioned for the ſake of its root, ſo likewiſe may the beaſt's number be; and ſo is to be counted as the number 144 is, by extracting its ſquare root. Now, the only entire number from which 666 can ariſe, as its ſquare root, is twenty-five. And if we look to that ſame viſion in Ezekiel, to which the reference is made in the marking or ſealing of the Lamb's number, we ſhall find this very number twenty-five uſed in the deſcription of the party that was oppoſite to them that were marked. See Ezek. viii. 16. 17. 18. and chap. xi. 1. 2.

The curious author of the method of counting the number of the beaſt, by extracting its root, has a great variety of inſtances in his application of the number twenty-five to the Roman church; and this is one remarkable, that when that church departed from the apoſtolic inſtitution altogether, and began to be at the head of the great apoſtaſy, Rome was divided into twenty-five pariſhes, and had ſo many places for baptiſm, and for receiving people into the church, and over theſe were twenty-five preſbyters under the Roman biſhop, who were the firſt cardinals, the oppoſites of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb. About that time it was, that theſe leaders of the church, that led the van in the great falling away, turned their backs on the order and worſhip of the church inſtituted by the apoſtles, and introduced the Heatheniſh ſuperſtition and idolatry, with a Heatheniſh people into the Chriſtian profeſſion; and theſe are they that deviſed miſchief, and gave wicked counſel in the church, as Ezekiel ſpeaks.

We may next obſerve, that in the meaſuring of the temple and city, *&c.* in Ezekiel, we have both theſe numbers, twelve and twenty-five, again and again made uſe of. We have the number twelve in Ezek. xlviii. 31.—34. expreſsly referred to in the deſcription of the new Jeruſalem, Rev. xxi. 12. 13. But as for the number twenty-five, it is not

found in the deſcription the Revelation gives us of the meaſuring the new Jeruſalem; while at the ſame time we muſt carefully notice, that the meaſuring in Ezekiel, and that in the Revelation, chap. xi. differ expreſsly in this, that John is indeed called to meaſure the temple, Ezek. xli. 1. and them that worſhip therein, *i. e.* the Lamb's number, and the altar, which, by Ezek. xliii. 16. was twelve cubits long and twelve broad; but the court which is without the temple, is left out, and not meaſured; becauſe it is given unto the nations, who tread the holy city under foot forty-two months. And Ezekiel takes notice, and reproves this abominable tranſgreſſion of the law of the houſe among the children of Iſrael, chap. xliv. 5.—9. and chap. xliii. 7.—12. But the outer-court, and the whole portion of ground whereon the temple and city ſtood, are meaſured in Ezekiel; and in that meaſuring, which is not allowed, Rev. xi. we find the number twenty-five much inſiſted on, Ezek. xl. 21. 25. 29. 30. 33. 36. and xlv. 1. and xlviii. 15. 20. Yea in theſe texts we alſo find the number five, which is again the ſquare root of twenty-five; and even this number is ſomeway applied to the kingdom of Antichriſt, Rev. ix. 5. 10.

However, it is plain, that the number left out in meaſuring of the temple by John, and found moſt remarkably in Ezekiel, is the number twenty-five. And in the ſecond meaſuring in the Revelation, after the deſtruction of Antichriſt, there is no need of meaſuring the temple and its court: for John ſaw no temple in the new Jeruſalem, but the Lord God and the Lamb. But ſeeing Ezekiel ſhews us the meaſure of the whole, while he complains of the tranſgreſſion of the law of the houſe; and ſeeing John, during the time of the profanation of the holy place, and the city, meaſures only what can be meaſured by twelve, and leaves out that where the number twenty-five is uſed in Ezekiel; it would appear, that the number twenty-five is the number of the company that tranſgreſſes the law of the houſe, and profanes the holy place, in oppoſition to them that worſhip in the inner-temple, whom John is called to meaſure, and to whom the number twelve applies.

By this we may learn, that whatever it be in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and in the order and worſhip of the houſe of God, that cannot be meaſured by twelve, or by the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb, that is not of Chriſt, but of Antichriſt. And whatever profeſſion of Chriſtianity

stianity it be that arises not from the doctrine of the twelve apostles, but either a number reaching beyond twelve toward twenty-five, or falling short of it toward five, that is not the true Christian, but the Antichristian profession. And however few or many the professors be, whose profession arises not from the precise twelve, or who derive not their origin only from twelve, as do both the Old and New-testament churches; these must be they who have so far the number of the beast's name. If therefore we would not be reckoned among the worshippers of the beast, let us cleave strictly to the New Testament, and to the plan of the church laid down by the twelve apostles of the Lamb, without the least addition thereto or diminution from it. And let us reckon upon no profession of Christianity in ourselves or others that is not produced by the gospel itself, and the influence of the words of the apostles of Christ upon our minds: for the outer-court is left out, and not measured, when it cannot be measured by the measure of the new Jerusalem during the time of the beast's reign; and then it is possessed by the beast and his company.

But, after all, the beast's number doth not arise from the number twenty-five as its square root, without an added fraction. And seeing twenty-five is the only entire number from whence it can arise, it may be inquired, Why is not the number of the beast said to be 625, which arises precisely from twenty-five as its square root? And why might not any other number that arises from twenty-five with a fraction, have been the number of the beast, as well as 666; or why is this fixed upon as the beast's number, rather than any other that arises from twenty-five, with a fraction?

To this it may be answered, 1. Here is indeed a palpable difference between the number of Christ and Antichrist: The Lamb's number arises from twelve by twelve precisely, without any borrowed help; but the number of the beast rises not from twenty-five without a borrowed fraction from another number. Which perhaps may denote the same thing that Daniel said of Antichrist, under the type of Antiochus Epiphanes, Dan. viii. 24. "And his power shall "be mighty, but not by his own power." For Antichrist's number was not made up without the borrowed aid of the broken empire: the ten kings that arose in the broken empire, gave their power to the beast.

But, 2. Neither the number 625, nor any other number that arises from twenty-five with a fraction, was so capable

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to be expressed in a manner wherein there should be a description of the numbered company, as is the number 666. This number is not written full by the words that signify it according to the common use of the scriptures; but in the figures χ, ξ, ς. And these figures whereby the Greeks used to express the number 666, are the initials of three words that give a true description of all the followers of the beast, in opposition to the followers of the Lamb, and that make up a character which will agree to none but the beast and his followers; and these words are χριστιανοι ξενοι σαυρῳ, i. e. *Christians strangers to the cross.*

This description will not agree to any that make not some profession of being Christians, nor to any but Christians falsely so called. It cannot agree to them to whom the number one hundred forty-four is applied; for these are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes; and if any man will come after him, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow him. This description of the beast and his company who go under the Christian name, is plainly contrary to the description of true Christianity and true Christians in the New Testament: as will easily appear by casting our eyes on these texts, Matth. xvi. 21.—26. 2 Tim. iii. 10.—13. Gal. vi. 12. 13. 14. Phil. iii. 8. 10. 11. 15. 17.—21. 1 Pet. iv. 1. 12. 13. *&c.* And in the book of the Revelation, patience is still the character of the Lamb's company, chap. vi. 9. 10. vii. 14. xii. 11. 17. xiii. 10. and xiv. 12. 13. So that if we would make up a character of the followers of Christ, in opposition to Antichrist, from the New Testament, and from the book of the Revelation, they must be those that suffer patiently for keeping the commands of God, and the testimony of Jesus, as set forth in the doctrine of the twelve apostles, or in the writings of the New Testament. Therefore how can they who are against Christ and Christianity, and that under the Christian name, be better described and distinguished than by these words, *Christians strangers to the cross?* And is there any other description of Antichrist's whole company, both the persecutors and them that submit to Antichristian authority for fear of the cross, that can take them all in, with a plainer opposition to the slain Lamb's followers, than this, that they are strangers to the cross? None of Antichrist's company can thus count the number of the beast; for they are all one way or other persuaded by the power of strong delusion, that they may be Christians

Christians without the cross. And because it requires wisdom received from the word of God, to know this difference betwixt Christ and Antichrist, thus to count the beast's number, I doubt not, but to all them that have this wisdom, and to none else, this way of counting it will be agreeable. If God thought fit to make three words stand for three sentences, Dan. v. 25.—28. why may not the three initials be here put for three words, especially in a motto?

It is to be observed, that the mark set on the Lamb's company, during the time that Antichrist possesses the outer-court, is not visible in their outward order and worship, but only before the Lamb and his Father: for they worship in the inner-court, while the court without the temple is left out, and not measured, being given to the nations to tread it under foot, chap. xi. 1. 2. and xiv. 3. While the woman, the church, was in the wilderness hid from the face of the serpent, chap. xii. the servants of God were as the seven thousand in the midst of idolatrous Israel, whom the Lord reserved to himself, and kept from bowing the knee to Baal, who were not known to Elijah, and perhaps not to one another. Thus we are not to inquire for any true visible church that can be measured exactly by the word of God, during the reign of Antichrist, or till the end of the time, times, and a half.

And before we leave this subject, we must likewise observe, that the beast's number is by far greater than the Lamb's; and to this agree chap. xiii. 7. 8. xvii. 15. Against all discouragement that may arise from this, the people of God are comforted in the 7th chapter, with an account of the appearance that the Lamb's company will make at last, when Antichrist is fully destroyed, and they brought out of all their tribulations, and gathered together before the throne of God and the Lamb. By comparing chap. vii. 9. to 17. with chap. xxi. 4. it may appear, that the last part of chap. vii. speaks of the saints in their glorified state.

And it was very proper, in the introduction to the prophecy concerning the coming of Antichrist, to comfort the church with an account of the glorious issue of that great evil that was to come over the church. But it is full time now to proceed to consider the opening of the seventh seal.

Seal VII. chap. viii. 1. The silence in heaven for the space of half an hour, comes after the disturbance given to the church by the Heathenish power of the empire, which had

had just passed away by the sixth seal, as a calm after a storm. This silence also respects what is immediately to follow, *viz.* the blowing of the trumpets; for as it comes at the close of one scene, so at the opening of another we have this solemn attentive silence. If it be inquired, what event on the earth answers to this silence? we answer, silence signifies rather a forbearing of action; but perhaps the liberty of conscience at first allowed by Constantine throughout the empire, and the short season of rest after the end of Heathenish persecution, and before any Christian persecution by the power of the empire began, may be intended by this half-hour's silence. And this outward rest, together with the forementioned with-holding of the Spirit's influences, served to prepare the Christian ministers and people for what follows.

When the seven angels get the trumpets, there is an introduction to their founding in the appearance of another angel, as a priest, offering much incense with the prayers of all saints, causing them to ascend before God, and then filling his censer with fire off the altar, and casting it into the earth; upon which followed voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

This can be no other than the Son of God, the uncreated angel of the covenant, the high priest of the church, who is frequently thus designed in the Old Testament. The prayers of all saints find acceptance and an answer only through his intercession; and here they are answered by terrible things in righteousness. All the Old-testament saints prayed for the first coming of Christ, and these prayers were answered by terrible things in righteousness on the Jewish nation. In like manner the prayers of all the New-testament saints are for his coming again the second time; but that time could not come till there should be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, 2 Thess. ii. So that the design of this appearance of the church's high priest, is to let the saints know, that whatever evil comes to pass by the opening of the seventh seal, and the blowing of the trumpets, yet there was nothing in it but the answer of their prayers, and all would end well to them, according to the prayers, not which any saint may take in his head to put up, but of all the saints.

John saw the vision of the sealed book, and the opening of the seventh seal, in the representation of a temple in heaven. And as it is said, Psal. lxviii. 17. "The Lord is a-

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" mong the angels, as in Sinai in the holy place :" so here is a reference to the appearance on Sinai, with voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. We heard of an earthquake before, under the sixth seal, which seemed to denote that great change in the state of things that was in the passing away of the Heathenish power of the Roman empire. And now this earthquake that comes by the opening of the seventh seal, and by the blowing of the first of the trumpets, seems to be that notable change on the face of the Christian profession, and of the Roman empire, when that empire got on the form of Christianity, in the place of the religion it had before. And this appears to have been by the first five trumpets, as follows.

Trumpet I. chap. viii. 7. Here begins that hurt to the earth, against which the servants of God were secured by being sealed, chap. vii. 1. 3. And by the earth bringing forth grass and trees, (the hurt whereof puts the servants of God in danger), we may understand the primitive fruitful profession of Christianity, that depended on the influences of the Holy Ghost. Consider 1 Cor. iii. 9. Heb. vi. 7. Compare Psal. lxxii. 16. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Is. xliv. 3. 4. 5. The earth in the prophecies frequently signifies the land of Israel; and this hurting of the earth may be compared with that which is said, Is. xxiv. 5. 6. 7. This trumpet brings forth that evil which comes to its height by the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. 4. ; where there is a reference to Joel, chap. i. and ii. : and this burning of the earth may be borrowed from Joel i. 19. The earth is hurt here by hail and fire mingled with blood.

Hail seems to signify the wrath of God ; and here it may point out the strong delusion, which he sent on them who received not the love of the truth, that they should believe a lie, 2 Thess. ii. As the lie they believed was, that they could serve God and Mammon ; or seek the friendship of the world, and yet keep good friends with God ; or, that they might be Christians without denying themselves, and taking up their cross, and following the slain Lamb ; or, that the Christian profession was a broad way, wherein the whole Roman empire might walk, as it had done in the Heathenish religion before. This lie came to be believed through many plausible reasonings, from a carnal sense of the Old-testament prophecies, and a carnal application of passages in the Old Testament to the outward state of the New-testament church, with relation to the Roman em-

peror, who favoured Christianity, and to the empire. And these reasonings were attended with divers signs, which in that time were more observed than the words of the apostles of Christ, and the signs wrought by them, whereby their words were fully confirmed, so as to need no further signs; but as Christ came with signs, so did Antichrist.

And *fire* signifies strife and contention. When the Christian profession, through the foresaid strong delusion, came to be changed into a form of godliness, denying the power, there was great strife and fierce contention about the words of that confession of Christianity, which should be the public authorised confession in the empire.

This fire was mingled with blood; for then it was that persecution took place among Christians, when the Christian leaders, having the emperor now on their side, began to make use of his power against them who would not agree to the words of their confession. The difference indeed, at first, was on a point of the greatest importance in Christianity; and considering the application they made of the practice of the good kings of Judah to Constantine, persecution came in at first with fair pretences; but here all the murders that Antichrist hath committed, by the power of the kings of the earth, had their beginning.

All this could not but affect the ancient profession of Christianity, as hail and burning fire affect the face of the earth, and the fruits of it, Exod. ix. 24. 25.; yet it was not utterly destroyed, only the third part of the trees were burnt up.

Trumpet II. ver. 8. 9. This trumpet brings that hurt to the sea, which could not come upon it till the servants of God were first sealed, chap. vii. 1. 3. Waters in this book signify, peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, chap. xvii. 15.; and the gathering together of waters is sea. By the sea here, then, we may understand the multitude of Christians, or professors of Christianity, that were in the bounds of the Roman empire.

This sea was hurt by a great mountain cast into it. A mountain, in the prophecies, signifies a kingdom, Dan. ii. 35. and 44. Psal. lxviii. 16. and lxxvi. 4. Thus the Babylonish empire was called the destroying mountain, which the Lord said he would make a burnt mountain, Jer. li. 25. And this great mountain, which is here cast into the sea, may be the Roman empire; to which, though what is here said, seems not so much to intend hurt, as the sea into which it is cast; yet when the power, and

and grandeur, and wealth of the Roman empire, came into the hands of Chriſtians, there was a vaſt change in its conſtitution, and from thenceforth it declined very faſt till it was broken. But the hurt that the bulk of Chriſtions and their leaders received from thence, (though they thought it a great advantage), was very great.

This great mountain was burning with fire when it was caſt into the ſea; and, as has been ſaid, fire is put for ſtrife and contention, Luke xii. 49. 51. Judg. ix. 19. 20. Now, what ſhould the fire here be, but that ſtrife and contention among Chriſtians, about who ſhould poſſeſs moſt of the power, and wealth, and grandeur of the empire, when it came into their hands? The Chriſtian leaders had been contending long before about the preheminence in the church; but now they began to contend about the preheminence in the empire; and diviſions about their elections among the people, eſpecially in the moſt eminent places, came to a great height, even to the length of bloodſhed. Something like this ſtill continues where the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and the miniſtry of the goſpel, is attended with worldly advantages.

By this great mountain burning with fire, caſt into the ſea, the third part of the ſea became blood, or was corrupted, as the waters of Egypt when turned into blood, and the third part of living creatures in the ſea died, and the third part of ſhips was deſtroyed. Communion in ſpiritual or church privileges, and in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity was marred and ſpoiled, by the acceſs of multitudes to it, that ſought only worldly privileges, and by ſtriſe and fierce contention about theſe.

Trumpet III. ver. 10. 11. This trumpet brings hurt to the rivers and fountains of waters, as the laſt did hurt to the ſea. According to the notion already given of *waters*, rivers, and fountains of waters, muſt ſignify particular provinces and nations of men; and here the ſeveral provinces of the Roman empire, that were now for moſt part become Chriſtians, ſeem to be intended.

A ſtar is the ſign of a riſing kingdom, Numb. xxiv. 17. Matth. ii. 2. and its burning as a lamp denotes ſucceſs and proſperity, Iſ. lxii. 1. Its falling from heaven, therefore, cannot, as ſometimes it doth, ſignify its fall and ruin, but a removal from its native ſeat and habitation, and coming ſuddenly, ſurpriſingly, and in ſuch a manner as it cannot be well told how or whence it came. And this looks not

unlike the irruption of these barbarous people, the Goths, Vandals, &c. into the provinces of the Roman empire. This made these waters bitter; and so the name of the star is called Wormwood, according to Jer. ix. 15. and xxiii. 15. Those barbarous people that broke in upon the provinces of the Christian empire, fought their way, and took possession where-ever they came; and, being at their first entrance Heathen, they caused apostasy from such profession of Christianity as was then to be found where they came. Though yet afterward they themselves embraced the religon of the empire, which they subdued, as well as its laws; and when they got power as kings in it, and brought down its seventh head, they gave their power to the beast: for this same star that fell from heaven, set Antichrist on his throne at the blowing of the fifth trumpet, as we may see afterward.

Trumpet IV. ver. 12. From the use of the sun, moon, and stars, Gen. i. 16. they are taken to signify rulers and governments. And the consequence of that which began by the former trumpet, was the breaking of the government of the empire, and weakening the power of the emperors at the head of it, (which was quite taken away by the next trumpet), and consequently of all that had dominion in it under that head; yet the government of the empire was not fully destroyed, for to this day something of it remains in the several nations within the bounds of it.

These four trumpets take up the time of about an hundred and fifty years, from the beginning of the fourth century, which is the season pointed at by the church in Pergamus. And by them preparation was made for the evil that comes by the fifth, which is the first wo, the kingdom of Antichrist; for in order to that, it behoved the Christian profession to be changed, and fitted to the empire, and the Christian ministry and people corrupted by the wealth and grandeur of that empire, and the power of it weakened to make way for the ten kings that should give their power to Antichrist; whose kingdom we are to consider under the next trumpet. But here I break off, and am, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR, *Nov.* 1. 1734.

BEfore I enter upon the fifth trumpet, I hope it shall not be disagreeable to you, that I add somewhat to that

that which was ſaid in my laſt of the number of the beaſt. I obſerved it is not uſual in ſcripture to expreſs numbers by figures, or letters that ſerve as figures; but I ſhould have noticed, that, contrary to the conſtant uſe of the ſcripture in all other caſes, not only the number of the beaſt, but alſo its oppoſite, the number of the Lamb, 144, and 12 its ſquare root, are expreſſed in numeral letters, Rev. vii. where it is obſervable, that the thouſands adjected to thoſe numbers are not ſo expreſſed, but writ full; and this ſerves to ſtrengthen what has been before alledged, *viz.* That it is the number 144, with 12 its root, that is chiefly intended; and that the thouſands are adjected only to ſignify the multitude of the members of the true church that is built on the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles.

The number 144, that is full writ, Rev. xiv. 1. where it is oppoſed to the number of the beaſt, is ſet down, chap. vii. 4. in theſe letters, which ſignify that number among the Greeks, ϱ μ δ. And theſe are the initial letters of three Greek words that make up a character and motto for the followers of the ſlain Lamb, directly oppoſite to the motto or deſcription of the beaſt and his company. Theſe words are, ῥήματος μάρτυρες διακόμενοι, i. e. *The perſecuted witneſſes of the word.*

The number 12 is ſet down, chap. vii. 5. 6. 7. 8. in theſe two Greek letters, ι β, which are the initials of two words that are the title or motto both of the typical church built on the twelve patriarchs, and of the New-teſtament church built on the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb, 1 Pet. ii. 9. compared with Exod. xix. 6. And theſe words are, ἱεράτευμα βασίλειον, i. e. *The royal prieſthood.* The true church is oftener than once thus deſigned in the book of the Revelation, as chap. i. 6. v. 10. and xx. 6. And when the church is ſet forth in the viſion by the twenty-four elders, (with a reference to the twenty-four governors of the ſanctuary, over the twenty-four courſes of the prieſts, and to the twenty-four courſes of the ſacred muſicians), theſe elders appear as prieſts having crowns. We may likewiſe obſerve, that the true church of Chriſt is under this title oppoſed, by Peter, unto them who ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient; by whom Chriſt is diſallowed, as he is the corner-ſtone, and the head of the corner, and to whom he is a ſtumbling-ſtone. See 1 Pet. ii. 4.—9.

The oppoſite number, 25, which appears frequently in Ezekiel, where the Revelation refers to that prophecy, yet doth

doth not appear in the Revelation; but if we ſhould expreſs it in the proper letters, as the number twelve is expreſſed, the letters would be ΙΒ. And theſe again happen to be the initials of two words, which make a title or motto very proper for the Antichriſtian kingdom, as it is oppoſed to the royal prieſthood. Theſe words are ΙΟΥΔΑΪΣΜΟΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΗ, i. e. *The Gentile Judaiſm*, or *the Judaiſm of the Gentiles*. Compare Rev. xi. 2. with Matth. xx. 25.—28. Mark x. 42. Luke xxii. 24.—27. and 1 Pet. v. 3.

By this time, I ſuppoſe, you will judge I have purſued this thought far enough; and it will be much if I come off without being laid up with the Jewiſh cabaliſts, which is the company I do not love. But if this ſhould be my fate, I have at leaſt room to plead that Irenæus with his ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, and Grotius with his ΟΥΛΠΙΟΣ, ſhould go before me. For as I have kept cloſe by the proper letters wherein the numbers are ſet down in the book of the Revelation, without putting others in their place; ſo I have the common practice of making the initials to ſtand for words, in titles and mottoes, to ſupport me in all the uſe I have made of thoſe letters; neither have I drawn any thing from them, but what is clearly enough declared in the New Teſtament, and in the book of the Revelation.

When I conſider the notice that Jeſus Chriſt himſelf condeſcends to take of the very order wherein the Greek letters ſtand in the alphabet, in one of the titles he takes to himſelf in that book, I cannot ſay I have any reaſon to be aſhamed of all the pains I have taken in this affair of letters.

But it is time to proceed to the conſideration of the trumpets, beginning where we left off.

Trumpet V. chap. ix. 1.—12. The firſt of the three woes mentioned in the cloſe of the foregoing chapter, comes by this trumpet. The inſtrument of this firſt wo, is that ſtar which fell from heaven, chap. viii. 10. For theſe words, ΕΙΔΟΝ ΑΣΤΕΡΑ ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΥ ΠΕΠΤΩΚΟΤΑ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΓΗΝ, might have been rendered, *I ſaw the ſtar which fell from heaven to the earth*. We ſaw before what were the effects of this ſtar upon the ſeveral provinces of the empire, when it fell upon them at firſt by the third trumpet. We have likewiſe taken notice of the conſequences of it, with reſpect to the government of the empire, and its rulers ſupreme and ſubordinate, by the fourth trumpet. And now when this fifth trumpet begins to ſound, that ſame ſtar gets the key of the pit of

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the abyss, and opens it; and when it is opened, there comes up smoke, whereby the sun and the air is darkened.

By the darkening of the sun and the air, we may understand the extinction of the supreme government, or ruling power that was in the Roman empire, or that fall of the seventh head that succeeded the sixth, which ruled when John had this vision. It behoved this seventh head, which was not yet come when John wrote, (*viz.* the Christian emperors), to continue a short space, and then give way to the eighth, or to *the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, who ascendeth out of the bottomless pit*, chap. xvii. 8. 10. 11. John saw the seventh head wounded to death, chap. xiii. 1. 3. and beheld all the world wondering after the beast, when that deadly wound was healed, and which had the wound by a sword, and did live, ver. 12. 14. This is that Antichrist to whom the ten kings gave their power, which had received no kingdom in the empire, when John wrote, but were to get power in it as kings one hour with the beast; or, at the same time with the eighth head, which is of the seven, and is the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, chap. xvii. 11. 12. 13. Now, in that which John saw at the blowing of the fifth trumpet, we have a representation of the fall of the seventh head, and of Antichrist's kingdom, arising, in place thereof, out of the bottomless pit, under the emblem of crowned locusts coming out of the smoke of the pit, whereby the sun and the air had been darkened.

As it behoved the Christian emperors, under whom Antichrist was born and bred, to fall, in order to his coming to be at the head of the empire, or mounting his throne; so when his kingdom was now coming in the full power of it, the glory of the kingdom of Christ and his government of his willing people, subjected by his power to his own authority in his word, must of course disappear quite among all the professors of Christianity that were to worship the beast or Antichrist. And I shall not deny that this may be also intended in the darkening of the sun and the air by the smoke of the pit, out of which came the crowned locusts.

That it is the kingdom of the beast, or of the clergy, supported with the power of the ten kings, (who gave them their power to make the broken empire subject to them), that is intended here by the crowned locusts coming out of the smoke of the pit, may appear, if we consider,

1. This is that evil come to its height, which began with the

the first trumpet, and against which the servants of God were sealed. Compare chap. vii. 3. and viii. 7. with chap. ix. 4.

2. When we consider the six vials before the seventh, and observe how they answer to these six trumpets, we see the fifth vial, which is the reverse of this fifth trumpet, is poured out on the throne of the beast, and fills his kingdom with darkness; from which we may infer, that the fifth trumpet, to which that vial is opposed, sets the beast on his throne, and brings his kingdom in the power of it.

3. When the beast is after this, once and again, called the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss, chap. xi. 7. & xvii. 8. it seems to be with reference to what is here said of the darkening smoke ascending out of the pit of the abyss, and of the locusts coming out of it, who have the angel of the abyss for their king. This is that abyss where Satan is shut up, and which is closed upon him at the final ruin of Antichrist, that he may not deceive the nations, and out of which he comes again to stir up Gog and Magog against the saints, chap. xx. 1. 2. 3. 7.

The clergy then, having the broken empire in subjection to them, by the power of the ten kings that arose in that empire, when the seventh head was wounded to death, are here represented by locusts having on their heads as it were crowns like gold. This is borrowed from the prophet Nahum, who, prophesying of the fall of the Assyrian empire, (which may be a type of the Antichristian), says, chap. iii. 17. "Thy crowned like the locusts, and thy princes like the locust of locusts, incamping in the hedges "in the day of cold; the sun arose, and he is fled, and his "place is not known; where they?"

The damage done to the Christian profession, and outward estate of the church, by these locusts, may be understood, by considering the desolation brought on the land of Israel by the locusts, and other such creatures mentioned by Joel, chap. i. and ii. for the images here, whereby the kingdom of the clergy is described, are taken from thence.

"Their shapes were like horses prepared to battle; faces "as men: hair as the hair of women; teeth as of lions; "breast-plates as breast-plates of iron; wings sounding as "the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; "and tails like scorpions, with stings in their tails: for their "torment is as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh "a man."

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This is a strange composition of the greatest violence and the greatest deceit; of grandeur and baseness; of effeminacy and obstinate hardiness; of tenderness and most terrible fierceness and cruelty. This monstrous composition of qualities so different, pointed out in the hieroglyphic of the locusts, is very observable in clergymen reigning in this world by the power of the kings of the earth.

The blending together of civil and ecclesiastic power in the Antichristian kingdom, with the manner of the exercise of these powers there, may be the great thing here intended.

The whole power of the Antichristian kingdom is represented to us, Rev. xiii. by two beasts; because it could not be so fitly represented by one. That first beast with the ten horns, that had been wounded to death, and yet lived, is the concurring power of the ten kings that arise in the Roman empire, to make one opinion, (μίαν γνώμην, chap. xvii. 17.), or uniformity in religion, and to make the nations subject to the clergy.

The powers of the earth, whose employment is to punish all that work ill to their neighbour against the second table of the law, according to that ancient ordinance of God, Gen. ix. 6. are God's ministers in that matter, to whom he commands us to be subject, and to pay tribute, Rom. xiii. But the power of the kings of the earth, making uniformity, and supporting the clergy, and bringing the world in subjection to them, is the beast with the ten horns, the Antichristian power; to which only those are truly subject, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. After this beast, the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues do wonder, who yet shew no conscientious subjection to the powers that be, as they are the ordinance of God; and they worship the beast that pushes with the ten horns, or the clergy, whom they take for Christ, at the head of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; and in so doing, they worship the dragon who gave the clergy this power. Compare Rev. xiii. 3. 4. with Matth. iv. 8. 9.

The second beast that has horns like a lamb, and yet speaks as a dragon, who exerciseth all the power of the first beast in his presence, and causes worship be paid him, represents the ecclesiastic power of Antichrist, which the clergy will have to be very distinct from the civil power; yet their church-

government is nothing but an image of civil or secular government in the nations of this world; and they have power to give life to this image of the beast, that it should both speak, and cause them that would not worship it be killed, or cut off from the profession of Christianity. By this we may understand, what to think of that ecclesiastic government, which is conformed to the civil, and is the image of secular power. "It shall not be so among you," says our Lord.

But to return to the locusts: They are said to be a wo, as was noticed; and the great evil that comes by them, must be that same from which the servants of God are preserved by being sealed, Rev. ix. 3. 4. which can be no other than eternal destruction on men having some form of Christianity. For the locusts do this hurt, not by divesting them who are subject to them of all professions of Christianity; they do not kill them, as do those who are represented under the sixth trumpet. It would ease them who are subjected to the locusts, to be rid of all profession of Christianity, and the place of the locusts would no more be known where they were; so would it likewise ease them and rid them of the locusts, if they knew the power of Christianity: but the locusts, with all the subtilty and spite of the scorpion, deny and endeavour to extinguish the power of Christianity, and with all the violence of horses running to battle; and with the same deceit and violence they keep men under some form of Christianity, especially by violence. And thus their torment is as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man, and makes him as between death and life. By this pain the locusts live and reign; by this the clergy have their wealth and grandeur.

These locusts have a king over them, whose name is *Abaddon* in the Hebrew, and *Apollyon* in the Greek; even the dragon that gave power to the beast, chap. xiii. 4. His name signifies the *destroyer;* and it seems here to be opposed to the name *Jesus*, as this kingdom is opposed to the kingdom of Christ. Jesus signifies the Saviour; and the name of the Destroyer seems here to be opposed to what Jesus says of himself to his disciples, when they were wanting to have a city destroyed that refused to receive Christ, and pleading a precedent for this destruction in the Old Testament; he says, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: for the "Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to "save," Luke ix. 52.—56.

Therefore,

Therefore, where-ever we ſee a clergyman preaching up perſecution from the Old Teſtament, and ſtirring up the magiſtrate to ſerve him with his power, let his pretences be what they will, he is not the ſervant of Jeſus in that matter, but is indeed a locuſt, having that king over him whoſe name is *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*. So that we cannot be at a loſs to underſtand whoſe they are, who, under the moſt ſpecious ſhews of religion, are either ſtirring up the magiſtrate, or ſpiriting up the mob, to deſtroy the lives of them that differ from them in religion.

As I alledged that the ſecular and eccleſiaſtic powers of Antichriſt are repreſented by two beaſts, Rev. xiii. ſo I reckon the ſecond beaſt the ſame with the whore or falſe church, and likewiſe the ſame with the falſe prophet that works miracles in preſence of the beaſt. Compare Rev. xiii. 12. 13. *&c.* with Rev. xix. 20. And we may obſerve, this ſecond beaſt, this falſe prophet, pretends to imitate Elias, in that ſame thing wherein the diſciples were propoſing to imitate him, when our Lord rebuked them. As for the ten horns which have been frequently mentioned, Sir Iſaac Newton reckons them thus at their firſt riſe in the fifth century, *Obſervations on Daniel, chap.* vi.

1. The kingdom of the Vandals and Allans in Spain and Africa.
2. The kingdom of the Suevians in Spain.
3. The kingdom of the Viſigoths.
4. The kingdom of the Allans in Gallia.
5. The kingdom of the Burgundians.
6. The kingdom of the Franks.
7. The kingdom of the Britons.
8. The kingdom of the Hunns.
9. The kingdom of the Lombards.
10. The kingdom of [the Greeks] Ravenna.

Others have them thus:

1. The kingdom of the Britons.
2. The kingdom of the Saxons in Britain.
3. The kingdom of the Franks.
4. The kingdom of the Burgundians in Gaul.
5. The kingdom of the Viſigoths in the ſouth part of Gaul.
6. The kingdom of the Suevians and Allans in Gallicia and Portugal.

7. The kingdom of the Vandals, firſt in Spain, then in Africa.
8. The kingdom of the Allemans in the country of the Griſons.
   This kingdom was joined with the Heruli during their ſhort reign in Italy.
9. The kingdom of the Oſtrogoths in Hungary, and then in Italy, to whom ſucceeded the Lombards.
10. The kingdom of the Greeks in the reſt of the empire.

Or thus, with the time when each kingdom began.

	A. D.
1. Allemans, in the country of the Griſons and Hungary, which laſted about 139 years; but leſt the number ten ſhould not appear, the kings of the Lombards were by this time entered Hungary,	356
2. Oſtrogoths, firſt in Hungary, then in Italy,	377
3. Viſigoths in Hungary, then in Italy, next in Gaul, laſtly in Spain,	378
4. Hunns in Hungary, and ſome time through all Europe,	378
5. Britons with Romans in Britain, and after that Saxons,	406
6. Suevians, firſt in Gaul, ſecondly in Spain,	407
7. Allans, firſt in Gaul, ſecondly in Spain,	407
8. Vandals, firſt in Gaul, ſecondly in Spain, thirdly in Africa.	407
9. Burgundians in Gaul,	407
10. Franks in Gaul,	410

But this ſeems rather an account of the time of theſe people their breaking in upon the ſeveral provinces of the empire, while they were moving up and down in it, and diſtreſſing the provinces and the government of the empire, before they got full power in it as kings, having put down the ſeventh head, which was not till near the end of the fifth century.

Others have the ten kingdoms thus, with the times of their riſe, and the names of their kings; as,

1. The

	A. D.	
1. The kingdom of the Greeks began	337	Marcianus their king.
2. The Romans - -	422	Avitus their king.
3. The Suevians - -	409	Riciarius their king.
4. The Burgundians - -	413	Gundericus their king.
5. The Viſigoths - -	418	Theodoricus their king.
6. The Vandals - -	435	Genſericus their king.
7. The Britons - -	447	Vortimer their king.
8. The Oſtrogoths - -	454	Theodomerus their king.
9. The Saxons - -	455	Hengiſtus their king.
10. The Franks - -	456	Childericus their king.

Theſe barbarous people left their firſt habitations ſomewhere in the north, without the limits of the empire, and came in upon the empire in the fourth century; and towards the end of it they began to ſwarm in it, and then, and in the fifth century, fought under their ſeveral captains, ſometimes againſt the Romans, ſometimes againſt one another: and ſome of thoſe called kingdoms in the foregoing liſts were ſubdued before the emperor of the weſt was quite extinct; as the Suevians in Spain with Riciarius their captain, by the Viſigoths, *A. D.* 456.

But when Odoacer (the captain of the Turcilingi, with the Scyri and Heruli, his auxiliaries) put a final end to the emperor in the weſt, and reigned as king in Rome and Italy for ſeventeen years after; there were, beſides his kingdom at that time, *viz. A. D.* 476, theſe other kingdoms within the bounds of the empire. As,

2. The kingdom of the Oſtrogoths, who had ſhaken off the yoke of the Hunns after Attila's death, and had Theodomir for their king; whoſe ſon Theodoric, by the perſuaſion of Zeno the Greek emperor, did after this attack Odoacer, overthrew his kingdom, and ſet up the kingdom of the Oſtrogoths (*i. e.* the Eaſtern Goths) in Italy in place of his.

3. The kingdom of the Viſigoths (or Weſt Goths) in part of Gallia and in Spain, whoſe king a little after this was Alaricus.

4. The kingdom of the Vandals in Africa, whoſe king at this time was Genſericus; and his ſon Hunericus ſucceeded him ſoon after this.

5. The kingdom of the Hunns in Hungary. This people had about twenty-four years before this over-run a great part of Europe under Attila.

6. The kingdom of the Burgundians, who ſeem at this time to have been under Gundobaldus, with his brethren the ſons of Gundericus. Gundobald at laſt reigned alone, having killed his brethren; and his ſucceſſor was Sigiſmund, who

who married the daughter of Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths; and Alaricus king of the Visigoths married the other.

7. The kingdom of the Franks, who at this time had Childericus for their king, whose son Chlodoveus succeeded him, *A. D.* 482. Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths married the sister of Chlodoveus; and he married the daughter of Childericus the Burgundian, the brother of Gundobald. She dealt much with him to make him embrace Christianity, and at length in battle he prayed for the help of his wife's God, and got the victory, and so became a Christian before the end of this century. But if the Franks were behind with the Goths and Vandals in embracing Christianity (pardon me for calling the religion of those kings and their people by that name), they made it up afterwards: for the Goths and Vandals, though Christians long before, were of the Arian kind; but Chlodoveus, you must understand, was orthodox. After this the clergy were as much obliged to the Franks as to any of the kingdoms; especially the bishop of the church that led the van in the great apostasy. Pepin and Charlemagne did the bishop of Rome great service.

8. The Lombards came from the northern parts from whence came the Goths, Vandals, *&c.* and, under the conduct of their captains Iboreas and Aion, having beat the Vandals, *A. D.* 379, possessed themselves of divers places in the empire. At length, in the beginning of the sixth century, they invaded Hungary, under the conduct of Audoinus their king, who is said to have been their ninth king; so that we may well suppose they had a king in the year 476. Long after this, they, under Alduinus, subdued the Ostrogoths, and reigned in Italy in their stead; but were subdued at last by Charlemagne, at the intreaty of the bishop of Rome, to whom Charlemagne gave his temporal jurisdiction in Italy, after Odoacer's kingdom, the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, and the kingdom of the Lombards, had fallen to make way for his jurisdiction. See Dan. vii. 8. 20. 24.

9. The kingdom of the Saxons in Britain, of whom I need tell you nothing: Rapin will inform you.

10. The kingdom of the Greeks, whose king about this time was Zeno the emperor of the east; and that emperor could not now be reckoned the head of the empire, when the western emperor was put down, and there were so

many

many ſovereigns in it beſides him; his kingdom was now but a tenth part.

From what has been ſaid, it may appear, that, at the wounding of the ſeventh head of the empire to death, theſe kings ſeem to have been about the number of ten within the then bounds of the empire. And though there have been many changes among them ſince, with the putting down and ſetting up of kings, yet they have continued to this day in and about that number.

And though the empire under Antichriſt has loſt much ground on the eaſt and ſouth, by the Saracens and the Turks, yet it has gained on the north and weſt: for the Swedes, Danes, and Scots, that were not brought under the old Roman yoke, were ſubdued by Antichriſt, and gave him their power; and Muſcovy that was beyond the limits of the empire, is ſome way ſubject to the clergy too; and what ſhall we think of the Spaniſh conqueſt of the Weſt Indies?

We may further take notice, from what has been ſaid of the ten kingdoms at their firſt riſe, what ſort of Chriſtians it behoved theſe kings and their people to be, who became Chriſtians in the midſt of war and bloodſhed, while ſeeking habitations in the world by fire and ſword, with inſatiable avarice and ambition, and were not tamed by the Chriſtianity that they embraced. Theſe barbarous nations that ſeemed neither to fear God nor regard man for ordinary, yet paid no ſmall reſpect to the clergy, and particularly to the biſhop of Rome.

Attila the Hunn, that ſcourge of Europe, entered Italy, laid waſte ſeveral cities, and was on his way to Rome; but yielded to the Roman biſhop, who came to meet him, and returned home at his deſire.

Genſericus the Vandal entered Rome with fire and ſword, yet was mitigated by the biſhop, and abſtained from burning and ſlaying at his call.

Odoacer, who depoſed the emperor, was ſo far from depoſing the clergy or the biſhop of Rome, that he made a law about his election, which law, it is true, provided, that the election of the biſhop ſhould be with the king's conſent; but under Theodoric the Oſtrogoth, when ſeveral ſynods were held on the ſchiſm about the election of Symmachus, Odoacer's law, by which that caſe was firſt brought before Theodoric, was repealed, ſo as the election of the biſhop was from thence good without the king's conſent.

Of this Theodoric, Petavius the Jeſuit in his hiſtory ſays, "And

" And though he was, after the manner of the Goths, of " the Arian ſect, he defended the right and liberty of the " Roman church with great faithfulneſs."

Thus you have ſome ſhort account, ſuch as I can give you, of the people that tore the Roman empire in pieces, but left it united in the clergy, and became their firſt ſubjects when they aroſe, by their means, to reign in the broken empire, in room of the ſeventh head that was wounded to death by theſe people. —— *I am, &c.*

LETTER IV.

SIR, *November* 18. 1734.

IN my laſt you had an account of the fifth trumpet, and of the beginning of the kingdom of the clergy in the Roman empire, when the ſeventh head was wounded to death, and the ten horns or kings received power in it. This is the beginning of the 1260 days, which end at the pouring out of the fifth vial.

This beginning of the reign of the clergy over the empire is pointed out in the Revelation, as a very notable work of the holy, and wiſe, and all-powerful providence of God, Rev. xvii. 17. " For God hath put in their hearts " to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom " unto the beaſt, until the words of God ſhall be fulfilled." It is alſo repreſented as a thing that took place by the remarkable working of Satan. The ſmoke and the locuſts aſcend out of the bottomleſs pit, and have Abaddon, the angel of that pit, for their king; and Rev. xiii. 2. 4. " The " dragon gave him his power, and his ſeat, and great au- " thority.—And they worſhipped the dragon which gave " power unto the beaſt." The apoſtle, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. 10. 11. 12. ſpeaks both of the working of Satan, and of the work of the holy providence of God, in the coming of the man of ſin. It was indeed very ſtrange that the clergy roſe to reign by the fall of the Chriſtian emperors, who firſt raiſed them; and that they came to their kingdom, by means of thoſe barbarians, who, at their firſt falling in upon the provinces of the empire, were Heathen; and that thoſe people who tore the empire in pieces, thoſe kings independent of one another, and engaged in bloody wars againſt one another, yea, and divided at firſt about the profeſſion

profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſhould all agree to give their power to the clergy, to make the broken empire ſubject to them, and at length to make one opinion or uniformity.

That you may ſee how far the clergy were from falling by means of the fall of the ſeventh head of the empire, and how far the people who broke the empire, were from breaking them; I ſhall give you ſome quotations from Dupin's church-hiſtory, which you may add to the inſtances I gave in my laſt, of the reſpect paid to the clergy by the moſt dreadful kings of the people, who broke the empire.

Dupin, ſpeaking of the doctrine, diſcipline, and morality of the fifth century, (when the emperor in the weſt fell), ſays, there was but little difference between the fourth and the fifth in that matter; and this ſame was much, conſidering the vaſt difference betwixt the two, as to the ſtate of the empire. But before I tell you what he ſays on the fifth, I ſhall firſt give you ſome notes from him on the fourth (when the man of ſin came firſt into the world), in order to clear you further as to what was ſaid on the firſt two trumpets.

On the fourth century, he ſays, "They made uſe of "new terms for the defence of the truth, and clearly to diſ-"tinguiſh it from error.—Some falſe opinions were reject-"ed in this century, which were maintained by the authors "of the preceding ages, ſuch as the reign of Jeſus Chriſt "for a thouſand years upon earth.—Diſcipline was brought "to great perfection in this century, and ceremonies were "carried to the higheſt point of ſplendour.—They were "obliged to ſolemniſe ſundays and holidays, and to abſtain "on theſe days from all manner of ſervile work, not on-"ly from a principle of religion, but alſo from authority of "the laws.—They celebrated the feaſts of martyrs.—The "churches were adorned, and the ſacred veſſels were of gold "and ſilver.—Then the dignity of biſhops received a new "luſtre. The churches were diſtributed according to the "diſpoſition of the empire.—The eccleſiaſtical provinces "were regulated according to the civil provinces.—The "biſhops had the liberty of aſſembling in councils; they "held them every year in each province, and, in caſe of "neceſſity, they aſſembled from ſeveral provinces, and e-"ven from both eaſt and weſt."

But on the firſt three centuries, he ſays, "We do not "read, in any authors of credit, that councils were held "to condemn moſt of the firſt heretics. They looked "upon them as people excommunicated and ſeparated

" from the church, without their being condemned in ſy-
" nods.—The firſt councils mentioned in eccleſiaſtic hi-
" ſtory,—were thoſe that were held toward the end of the
" ſecond century, upon occaſion of the diſpute among the
" churches about Eaſter."

He ſays further on the fourth century, " It is in this age
" we muſt date the inſtitution of a monaſtic ſtate.—Some
" have traced it farther back, but the ſilence of the au-
" thors of the three firſt centuries about monks is very
" ſtrong —Morality was not attacked in this century by
" any error that tended to looſeneſs; but becauſe of the
" too great ſeverity of the Novatians, Encratites, Euſta-
" thians, and Luciferians, the church oppoſed that exceſs,
" in maintaining the evangelical liberty, and opening a
" way to ſinners to be reconciled to the church by penance.
" They began in this age to preſcribe maxims and parti-
" cular rules for a more perfect life than that of common
" believers. Chriſtianity becoming the common and al-
" moſt general religion in the Roman empire, we muſt
" not be ſurpriſed, if there were abundance of perſons who
" were only Chriſtians in name, and who led a life almoſt
" Heatheniſh; and—there were ſome prelates who made
" uſe of the pretext of religion to ſatisfy their ambition."

On the fifth century, he propoſes to make ſome remarks on what was peculiar to it; and among other things, he ſays, " In that age they wore out the notions about the
" reign of Jeſus Chriſt upon earth a thouſand years; nor
" did they affirm that the laſt judgment was ſo near.—
" The monaſtic ſtate ſpread more both in the eaſt and
" weſt than it had done before; the number of virgins who
" conſecrated themſelves to God, was greater than former-
" ly. The worſhip of martyrs and their relics was more ſo-
" lemn; the office of the church was celebrated with more
" ſplendour and magnificence. The wealth of churches
" was increaſed, and they began to make laws to hinder
" the diſſipating and alienating of it. They made abun-
" dance of rules about clergymens lives, and ordinations,
" ſimony, uſury, and ſeveral other points of diſcipline.
" The worſhip of ſaints was much heightened in this cen-
" tury. They kept their feaſts with more ſolemnity, they
" diſcovered many of their relics, and there was a great
" concourſe from all parts to viſit them."

By this you may perceive the clergy were far from falling when the ſeventh head of the empire was wounded to death;

death; and that the breaking of the empire, where they had been well planted before, was so far from breaking them, that when it was torn in pieces in other respects, it remained the more firmly united in them, and in subjection to them. You see how far Christians had deviated from the rule of the gospel when the clergy came to their kingdoms; and the accounts we have of the ten kings and their people, who first gave their power to the clergy, in the histories of their wars and their manners, do manifest abundantly, that they were far from subjection to Jesus Christ and his law; but they who are least subject to the authority of Jesus Christ in his law, are the fittest slaves to the clergy.

The locusts, that came out of the smoke of the pit, are the first of the woes, and it is said, "they torment men, "and have power to hurt them five months." It is said, this is the time of the continuance of locusts, when they fall on a country to waste the fruits; and some think, that in this allusion to the time of the continuance of locusts, it may only be intended, that this evil must have its course as the locusts, and, however long it continue, it will come to its appointed end. We noticed before, that the number 5 is the root of 25, from whence the beast's number arises; and whether any such thing be here intended, I leave you to consider. But five months, according to the prophetic way of counting time, (each day for a year, and forty-two months, 1260 years), make one hundred and fifty years, which is indeed far from the length of the time of Antichrist's reign; yet it happens to be much about the time that run from the putting down of the Roman emperor in the west, to the first beginnings of the Mahometan affair, which belongs to the next trumpet; and so the five months may denote the time from the fifth trumpet's beginning to blow, to the first rise of that evil, that came to its height by the sixth trumpet. Now, the first beginnings of the evil that comes to its perfection by the sixth trumpet, were about the year of our Lord 622; and in that space of one hundred and fifty years, Antichrist was settling himself on his throne; and when these five months, or one hundred and fifty years, are ended, and he is fully settled in his throne, the first woe is said to be past, *i. e.* come to its height, and fully established. I shall give you here again a few notes from Dupin, on the sixth and seventh centuries; for these hundred and fifty years run from toward

the end of the fifth century, to pretty far on in the seventh.

On the sixth century he says, "The doctrine of the "church was explained in this age with all the exactness "possible; but they began to debate about useless questions, "to explain mysteries by the rules of logic, and to dispute "with warmth about matters of small consequence.—As to "discipline, although the councils continually renewed the "ancient laws; yet it began to be already relaxed, and "the ancient rigour of penance was much abated. They "settled the degrees of kindred in which it was unlawful "to contract marriage; they extended them to first cou-"sins; they made many regulations about ordinations.— "The riches of the church began to be a burden to it, "because its ministers looked upon them as their proper-"ty; whereas formerly they were looked upon only as the "patrimony of the poor.—The bishops of the west passed "into a law, the custom of paying tithes to the curates. "In the Latin church they extended the obligation of li-"ving in celibacy, even to subdeacons.—The bishops "were yet elected by the clergy and people; but the fa-"vour of princes made them to be elected, who had nei-"ther learning, merit, nor capacity; they preserved to "metropolitans the right of ordaining the bishops of their "province; and the custom of celebrating provincial "councils every year was settled in the west. The church "of Rome was thrice vexed with the schism of Anti-"popes, and those of Alexandria and Antioch were often "the prey of the ambitious.—Some popes pretended to "rights and prerogatives, of which their predecessors never "dreamed; and there were flatterers who were at great "pains to make them believe, that they were indepen-"dent of, and above councils. But the more holy reject-"ed these false maxims, and made their greatest glory to "consist in keeping up the laws of the church *. The "monastic order was perfected in the east,—and in the "west."

And on the seventh century, he says, "They began to "reduce the doctrines of religion into a system; it was "then that the first treatises appeared upon all the points of "theology, and that they brought them to certain dog-"matical questions. The discipline of the church, "which was very much relaxed through the looseness of

* Dupin is a French Popish Sorbonnist.

"most

" most Christians, was kept up by several decrees of coun-
" cils, particularly in France and Spain, where these laws
" were authorised by the edicts of princes. The peniten-
" tials which seemed to be made to preserve discipline and
" penance, corrupted the purity of them, and soon annihi-
" lated their severity. Public penance was become more
" rare, and private ones more common and ordinary. Pri-
" vate masses were more frequent. The popes acquired
" more authority in the west. In the east, the princes
" meddled much in the affairs of religion. The western bi-
" shops were very careful to preserve and increase eccleśia-
" stical goods, which became more considerable than ever.
" The office of the church, and the number of its feasts
" were increased.—The fasts at the four seasons of
" the year, that were peculiar to the church of Rome,
" which they had practised from the fifth century, began
" to be established in other churches.—The Pantheon,
" which was dedicated by Boniface IV. in the year 613,
" under the name of the Virgin Mary, and all the saints,
" gave occasion to celebrate a feast by that title; to which
" did afterward succeed that of All-saints, in the eighth
" century. In fine, we may say, that it was in the seventh
" and eighth centuries of the church, that discipline be-
" gan to take that form which it had ever since, and has
" to this day, as well in the Greek as in the Latin church."

Thus we may reckon, that from the time that the first wo began to go forth, till it was fully gone out, there were about one hundred and fifty years; and when the first wo was fully gone out, and come to a settlement, the first beginnings of the second wo were working, which came at last to its height, and to a full stand, by the sixth trumpet. *Trumpet* VI. chap. ix. 12.—21. and chap. xi. 14.

It is generally believed, that the evil intended here is the empire of the Turks, propagating and supporting the Mahometan religion. And indeed it would seem that the emblems here used, do point out deadly error and delusion, and great imposture, propagated and maintained by the greatest violence and most formidable warlike power; which agree very well to the affair of Mahomet. This wo is intended against the Antichristian world, as appears from ver. 20. 21. even as the reign of Antichrist came as a wo upon the professors of Christianity that received not the love of the truth. But this second wo differs from the first in this, that, by the first, men were not killed, that is, divested of all profes-

sion

ſion of Chriſtianity; but by this the third part of men are killed; the third part of the world called Chriſtian, was diveſted of their Chriſtianity; even that part of the empire that was in Africa, and in Aſia, to the river Euphrates, the boundary of the empire on the eaſt. And though there have been, and are ſtill Chriſtians in theſe parts and beyond them; yet the apoſtaſy from the very Chriſtian name, cauſed by the Mahometan ſucceſſes, may very well be reckoned to have taken off a third part of them that went under the Chriſtian name, allowing all that ſtill go under that name in thoſe parts where the Mahometan powers are.

Some have imagined Mahomet to be Antichriſt; but the characters of Antichriſt, in Daniel and the Revelation, and the other writings of the New Teſtament, will no way agree to him. He is not that eighth head of the beaſt with the ſeven heads and ten horns, which is of the ſeven. His chief ſeat is not in Rome, the city that was reigning over the kings of the earth when John wrote, and which was built on ſeven mountains. He came not with ſigns and wonders, pretends no miracles, rejects the Chriſtian name, ſits not in the temple of God, poſſeſſes not the outer-court of the Lord's houſe, and has not the form of godlineſs, denying the power of it. He forbids not marriage, worſhips not dæmons, and idols of gold and ſilver; and though he aroſe againſt the empire, and diſtreſſed it ſore on one ſide as an enemy, yet he never ſubdued it; and the number and character of the beaſt cannot agree to him.

They who think the empire of the Turks is only intended by the ſecond wo that falls out under the ſixth trumpet, reckon its riſe about the year of our Lord 1300. And ſome are ſo preciſe as to date its beginning from May 19. 1301; and counting from thence, an hour, *i. e.* in the prophetical ſtyle, fifteen days, a day, *i. e.* one year, a month, *i. e.* thirty years, and a prophetical year, *i. e.* thirty-ſix years, making in all three hundred and ninety-ſix years, and one hundred and ſix days; this brings them to September 1. 1697; on which very day, by a famous victory over the Turks, it ſeemed to them as if an end were put to the ſecond wo; for it ſtopt the progreſs of their empire. But this calculation, that pretends to an exactneſs very extraordinary, ſeems at the ſame time very looſe in this, that the time wherein our years exceed the prophetical, is not defalked; and when a month is underſtood to be thirty years preciſely, (each day for a year), and an hour, fifteen days, a year cannot

cannot in this caſe be three hundred and ſixty-five days, it muſt be only three hundred and ſixty. And ſo the hour, day, month, and year, can be no more than three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days. But theſe three hundred and ninety-one years, being years conſiſting only of three hundred and ſixty days, are five days each year, and one day each fourth year, leſs than three hundred and ninety-one of our years; and ſo they will be but about three hundred and eighty-ſix of our years. Thus a calculation that pretends to be exact to a very day, falls wide no leſs than ten years.

It ſhould likewiſe have been conſidered, that the time here pointed at, muſt be that which runs from the looſing of the four angels, under the ſixth trumpet, to the drying up of the river Euphrates under the ſixth vial. But there was no end put to the Turkiſh empire in the year 1686, nor in the year 1697 either; and therefore the looſing of the four angels could not be in the year 1300, or 1301.

It may perhaps be true, that the Turks, before the riſe of their empire, were under four little heads which were reduced to one when their empire began; but it will not be ſo eaſy to make this the meaning of the looſing of the four angels that were prepared for ſo long a time after their looſing. For this looſing, in that caſe, would put an end to the four, which after the looſing are no more four, but one; while the text ſeems to ſay, that the four get liberty from thence to act and to continue till the end of the foreſaid time, for which they all are prepared.

And they that would underſtand only the empire of the Turks ſupporting the Mahometan religion, do not conſider, that Mahomet is not ſupported merely by the Turks; but there are other ſovereign powers, though of different ſects, yet all maintaining the Mahometan religion, as the emperor of Perſia, the Mogul of India, and the emperor of Morocco. All theſe powers took not place before the year 1400, though ſome of them were a little before; and if we count from thence 391 at 360 days in a year, it will come to about the year 1786. And about that time theſe powers may come to an end.

Mahomet aroſe when the clergy were well ſettled on their thrones in the beginning of the ſeventh century; and from thence forward, the Saracens, the firſt propagators of his religion, diſtreſſed the Roman empire, with the people called Chriſtians, and over-ran the empire in the eaſt and ſouth,

long

long before the Turkish empire arose. Alstedius, in his chronology, says, "*An. Christi* 731, the Mahometans go "into four sects. From this time the strength of the Sa- "racens was much weakened."

The binding up of them for a time, till that religion came at last to be maintained by all the foresaid four powers, may be the thing intended in the loosing of the four angels that were bound in the river Euphrates. This loosing of the four angels does not seem to be the beginning of this wo that comes by the sixth trumpet, but the time when it is come to its height: for it is not represented as falling out immediately upon the first blowing of the trumpet, but after the angel sounded, it is said to him, "Loose the "four angels that are bound." The wo had begun before at the blowing of the trumpet, but it had been restrained again; and the angel that blew the trumpet, is commanded to take off the restraint, and give it liberty to exert itself in four distinct powers.

Prideaux, in his life of Mahomet, speaking of him and the Saracens the first propagators of his religion, says, "From very mean beginnings he arose — to that height as "to make one of the greatest revolutions that ever happen- "ed in the world, which immediately gave birth to an em- "pire, which, in eighty years time, extended its domi- "nions over more kingdoms and countries than ever the "Roman could do in 800; and although it continued in "its strength not much above 300 years, yet out of its "ashes have sprung up many other kingdoms and empires, "of which there are three at this day, the largest and "most potent upon the face of the earth; I mean the em- "pire of Turky, the empire of Persia, and the empire "of the Mogul of India; which God hath permitted of "his all-wise providence, still to continue for a scourge unto "us Christians, who having received so holy and so excel- "lent a religion, through his mercy to us in Jesus Christ "our Lord, will not yet conform ourselves to live worthy "of it."

I know not if there be any other kingdom or empire, besides the three of which he speaks, sprung out of the Saracen ashes, that is sovereign and altogether independent of the other three, but that of Morocco. So that this, with the other three, makes up the four powers that support Mahomet, which seem to be the four angels that are loosed. And what he says of these empires, arising out of the ashes of the

empire

empire of the Saracens, seems to be the thing intended by the loosing of them. And when he speaks of them as being a scourge to Christians living unworthy of their religion, this may serve as an explication of Rev. ix. 20. 21.

The sixth trumpet takes up much more time than any of the foregoing; for it comprehends all the time from 150 years after the fifth trumpet began, or from the seventh century, unto the sixteenth century, when the seventh trumpet began to be blown. But though we have only an account of the loosing of the four angels here; yet we must consider, that this trumpet comprehends under it the voices of the seven thunders, which John is forbidden to write, chap. x. 3. 4. And as the time of the seventh seal is divided by seven trumpets, and the time of the seventh trumpet by seven vials; so no doubt the time of the sixth trumpet is divided by those seven thunders that uttered their voices, before the seventh trumpet blew. But those things which the seven thunders uttered, are sealed.

Yet we have several hints concerning things that came to pass with respect to Christianity during the sixth trumpet, and concerning the Antichristian world.

In the Antichristian world, the kingdom of the clergy, they had been, before the loosing of the four angels, worshipping dæmons and images; they had revived the old Heathenish worship of dæmons under the name of angels and saints; and they worshipped images and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, as much as ever their predecessors in the Heathen empire did before them. They had been guilty of this before; and the four angels were loosed as a dreadful scourge on them for this: but after these got power to divest the third part of them of the Christian name, they who remained under that name, both in the countries where the clergy still reigned, and even in the countries where these four prevailed, repented not of this gross idolatry.

Neither repented they of their murders, i. e. the wars stirred up by the clergy for the support of their authority, the religious wars, croisades, and especially the delivering over heretics and schismatics to the secular arm to be punished, and the persecutions of the Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Bohemians; all which was downright murder in his sight, who came not to destroy mens lives, but to save.

Nor of their sorceries; for the coming of the man of sin, was after the working of Satan, with signs and lying

wonders; and those that dwell on the earth were deceived by those signs which the beast got power to do. Yea the clergy came the length, in many instances, of downright colusion with the devil; and the old sorceries of the Gentiles were practised again in the Antichristian world by the superstitious people under a shew of religion.

Nor of their fornication; even literal, by means of the prohibition of marriage. But that which is intended here, is the fornication that the false church commits with the kings of the earth, that adorn and protect her instead of Christ, and by whose means her children are brought forth, instead of the power of the word and Spirit of Christ, whereby the children of the true church are brought forth, Rev. xvii. 2. and xviii. 3. 9. For this fornication is here distinguished from the worship of images, and saints, and angels; and it is committed with the kings of the earth, by her that pretends to be the spouse of Christ, and takes them in his place.

Nor of their thefts. All the merchandise of Babylon, all the ways they had of enriching themselves, and all their worldly gains that arose to them from the superstitious world, and by the power of the kings of the earth, were no other in the sight of God, than downright thefts. It is propheſied of Antichrist under the type of Antiochus Epiphanes, Dan. xi. 39. That *he shall divide the land for gain.*

In all these they persevered under the second wo: and when it was come to its height, even when the four angels were loosed and slaying the third part of them, the rest, instead of repenting, abounded the more in them.

We see likewise, that, in the time of the sixth trumpet, the nations were still treading under foot the outer-court of the Lord's house. For this trumpet takes up a considerable part, yea the greatest part of the 1260 days, wherein the outer-court is trodden under foot, and not measured, because it is given to the nations. The Lord's two witnesses, in that time, were still witnessing against the transgressions of the law of the house, and tormenting the nations with their testimony; till at length they were killed by the beast, when their testimony was perfected or fully brought forth; and their resurrection and exaltation, in allusion to the resurrection and exaltation of our Lord, was at the end of the sixth trumpet, and when the seventh was about to be blown, chap. xi. 11.—15. I shall not repeat what I have

said

said of the two witnesses in the *General View of the Revelation;* only we see, by the reference to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, to Elijah, and to Zerubbabel, and Joshua, with the garments of his captivity upon him, and to our Lord in his ministry among the Jews, that the Antichristian state was then the antitype of the Egyptian bondage, of Israel under Jezebel, of the Babylonish captivity, and of the state of the Jews when they persecuted our Lord, and put him to death; and it is expressly said to be spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Such was the kingdom of the clergy in its perfection during the time of the sixth trumpet.

The publishing of the gospel the second time among the nations, by the translations into their languages, is pointed out as having its beginnings under this sixth trumpet. This seems to be intended by the little book open in the hand of the angel, at whose call the seven thunders uttered their voices, and who foretold the end of time, when the seventh trumpet should blow; and when John takes the little book and eats it, that angel said unto him, "Thou must prophe-"sy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, "and kings." The apostles preached at first to the nations by word of mouth with the gift of tongues; but now they began to preach a second time by their writings in the languages of the nations, into which they were translated. And this was a preparation for the seventh trumpet, which followed immediately upon the scriptures their beginning to work again upon the minds of men, after they had been subdued by the beast; which may be the resurrection of the witnesses. About the time that the witnesses were killed and revived, *the tenth part of the city fell*; which may signify the fall of the kingdom of the Greeks, and the Greek church, at which the remnant were affrighted, and acknowledged the justice of God in his judgment. After this tenth part of the city fell by the Turks, the second wo came to its height; and the seventh trumpet, which brings the end of time, followed quickly. I shall say no more on the sixth trumpet; only the time of the fifth and the sixth trumpets seems to be the time pointed out in the vision of the candlesticks, by the church in Thyatira. And now I think it is time to put an end to this letter. —— *I am, &c.*

LETTER V.

SIR, *March* 13. 1735.

THE Apocalypſe ſerves to open the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, as has been ſaid; but eſpecially the prophecy of Daniel; and there is nothing more manifeſtly foretold in Daniel, than the ruin of the enemies of the Meſſiah's kingdom, and the reign of the ſaints over the world.

This was expected by the church, when the Lamb took the ſealed book to open it; and this is ſet forth in the ſong of his redeemed, as the iſſue of the looſing the ſeals thereof, chap. v. 8. 9. 10. and it comes out under the ſeventh ſeal, by the ſeventh trumpet, which lies now before us.

Trumpet VII. chap. xi. 15.—19.

The foregoing trumpets exalted the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, and this trumpet deſtroys them, and exalts the kingdom of Chriſt and his ſervants, who were depreſſed by them. This accompliſhment of Daniel's prophecy, concerning the kingdom of Chriſt, is here celebrated in the ſongs of the church, as the iſſue of the blowing of this trumpet, ver. 15. 16. 17. 18.; and it is further declared in the viſions that ſerve to explain this trumpet, and particularly in the viſion that explains the ſeventh vial.

Here we may take a view of Daniel and the Apocalypſe together on this ſubject.

DANIEL, chap. ii.

Ver. 34. Thou ſaweſt till a ſtone was cut out without hands, which ſmote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

35. And the ſtone that ſmote the image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

36. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation.

40. And the fourth kingdom ſhall be ſtrong as iron.—

42. And as the toes of the feet,

APOCALYPSE, chap. xi.

Ver. 15. The kingdoms of this world are become our Lord's and his Chriſt's, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.

17. Thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned.

18. And the nations were angry, and thy anger is come, and the time of the dead that they ſhould be judged, and that thou ſhouldſt give reward unto thy ſervants the prophets, and to the ſaints, and them that fear thy name, ſmall and great, and ſhouldſt

feet, part of iron, and part of clay; the kingdom ſhall be partly ſtrong and partly broken.

44. And in the days of theſe kings ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a kingdom which ſhall never be deſtroyed; and the kingdom ſhall not be left to other people, and it ſhall break in pieces, and conſume all theſe kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand for ever.

Chap. vii.

Ver. 3. 4. Great beaſts coming up from the ſea.

7. Behold, a fourth beaſt, dreadful and terrible, and ſtrong exceedingly.—— And it had ten horns.

8. I conſidered the horns, and behold, there came up amongſt them another little horn.——And behold, in this horn were eyes like a man, and a mouth ſpeaking great things.

9. I beheld till the thrones were caſt down (or elated), and the ancient of days did ſit.

10.—The judgment was ſet, and the books were opened.

11. I beheld then, becauſe of the voice of the great words which the horn ſpake: I beheld till the beaſt was ſlain, and his body deſtroyed, and given to the burning flame.

12. As concerning the reſt of the beaſts, their dominion was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a ſeaſon and time.

13. And I ſaw—the likeneſs of the ſon of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a ſhouldſt deſtroy them which deſtroy the earth.

Chap. xiii.

Ver. 1. I ſaw a beaſt riſe up out of the ſea, having ſeven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns.

5. And there was given unto him a mouth ſpeaking great things, and blaſphemies; and power was given to him to continue forty-two months.

6. And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name and tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7. And it was given to him to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them.

Chap. xvii.

Ver. 12. And the ten horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings.

13. Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength to the beaſt.

14. Theſe ſhall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them.

Chap. xvi.

Ver. 13. And I ſaw three unclean ſpirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beaſt, and out of the mouth of the falſe prophet.

14. For they are the ſpirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God almighty.

15. Behold, I come as a thief.—

16. And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.

Chap. xix.

Ver. 19. And I ſaw the beaſt, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to

a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

17. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

18. But the saints of the most high ones shall take the dominion, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

19. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast——.

23. The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth.

24. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

25. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and he shall wear out the saints of the most high ones, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time.

26. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end.

27. And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high ones, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

28. to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him.——These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Chap. xx.

Ver. 4. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them;—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

6. Blessed and holy he that hath part in the first resurrection. ——They shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened,—and the dead were judged——.

15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

Chap. xxi.

Ver. 1. And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth.

5. Behold, I make all things new.

Chap. xxii. 5. And they shall reign for ever and ever.

Chap. x. 7. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

Chap. xvii. 17.—to give their kingdom to the beast till the words of God be fulfilled.

Chap. xvi. 17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

Chap. xxi. 6. And he said unto me, It is done.

7. He

28. Hitherto the end of the matter, (or word.)

7. He that overcometh, shall inherit all things.

From these texts compared, we may see that this kingdom will begin at the destruction of the beast with the ten horns; and when the stone falls on the feet and ten toes of the great image; and when the likeness of the Son of man comes with the clouds of heaven, and is brought near to the Ancient of days, according to Daniel; or, as in the Apocalypse, when God repays the wrath of the nations with his wrath, and destroyeth them who destroyed the earth; and when the Son of man, the Word of God, comes from heaven to the battle of that great day of God almighty, against the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies; when the beast and the false prophet are taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And this is the same of which the apostle speaks to the Thessalonians, when speaking of the Lord's second coming, he says, 2 Thess. ii. 8. "The Lord will destroy the man of sin "with the brightness of his coming." But there he tells us that the man of sin is first to be consumed by the spirit of the Lord's mouth. And these words of the apostle are taken from Daniel, chap. vii. 26. "They shall take away his do-"minion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end." This consuming of the beast, or of the man of sin, that goes before his final destruction, is more particularly declared in the Apocalypse, chap. xiv. from ver. 6. to the end; where the preaching of the everlasting gospel seems to be the same with the spirit of the Lord's mouth, whereby Paul says the man of sin is consumed. And the several steps of the consumption of the man of sin, in consequence of the publishing of the gospel in the languages of the nations, unto his total ruin, at the coming of Christ, are more particularly pointed out to us in the vials that are poured out under the seventh trumpet; for, by comparing Rev. xi. 19. with chap. xv. and chap. xvi. we see that the things which follow upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, or fall out while it blows, are brought to pass by the vials.

Vial I. chap. xvi. ver. 2. answers to the first trumpet, and points at the time, when some of the ten kings, minding their own interest, stood up in defence of the publication of the scriptures against the Roman church; and when those kings, who had given their power to the beast, to maintain one confession and uniformity, began to break that

that uniformity, and to differ about the confession which they should support by their power.

Vial II. chap. xvi. ver. 3. answers to the second trumpet, and signifies the strife and discord that took place throughout the body of the Antichristian society, in consequence of the former vial, and the breaking of the communion of that society, in such a manner, as it could no more be maintained entire through it all. Hereby there came to be three stated communions; the Popish, Lutheran, and Calvinist, or rather Zuinglian; and so stated, that all attempts to reconcile any one of them with another, or to live in communion with them all, have been to no purpose. And this will continue to the end: for the finishing stroke on Babylon, when it comes, will find the great city divided in three parts.

Vial III. chap. xvi. ver. 4. 5. 6. 7. answers to the third trumpet, and points out the bloody divisions and strifes in particular nations and kingdoms, about the particular form of religion and church-government they should be under. And the blood shed in the Antichristian nations on this account, was the just judgment of God upon them, for their persecuting the patient sufferers for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, among whom those cannot well be reckoned who suffered for any national form of Christianity, in a strife for the public leading of religion.

Vial IV. chap. xvi. ver. 8. 9. answers to the fourth trumpet, and signifies the raising of church-authority to an intolerable height, while it circulated from hand to hand among the contending parties, and exerted itself with the greater vehemence, that it was opposed by those who were hoping to reign in their turn; so that men began to be weary of it, and reproach the gospel and the publication of it, as the cause of all this mischief.

Vial V. chap. xvi. ver. 10. 11. answers to the fifth trumpet, and distresses the kingdom of the clergy, as at this day, when the world is going into the course of infidelity, persecuting principles wearing out, and the kingdom of heaven that was preached by Christ and his apostles, against the kingdom of this world which the Jews expected, is again discovered in opposition to church-authority, supported with secular power; so that Christianity appears to be the reverse of a national religion; and when church-authority is no more so capable, as it has been to exert itself thoroughly in any shape. This galls the clergy to the heart, and

and they reproach the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, as it stands against their kingdom, which is of this world, and they repent not of their deeds: for so far as they have power to persecute, they do it still; and the spirit of ambition, or thirst after power, and the spirit of persecution, remain with them still.

Vial VI. chap. xvi. 12.—16. answers to the sixth trumpet, and breaks the Mahometan powers, and so makes way for the coming of Christ, as the antitype of Cyrus, to destroy Babylon, and to deliver his people. Then the beast makes his last effort against Christ's kingdom, his last struggle for life; and the kings of the earth, and their armies, are gathered together to the battle of the great day of God almighty, and to their last overthrow, typified by the overthrow of Sisera and the host of Jabin at Megiddo. This comes by the seventh vial.

Vial VII. chap. xvi. ver. 17.—21. which brings to pass the great event of the seventh trumpet, gives the finishing stroke to Babylon, pours out all the wrath of God, and finishes the mystery of God. Here is a reference to the terrible appearance of God on Mount Sinai, when he erected the kingdom of Israel, ver. 18.

And when the vengeance of God is represented as falling on the third part of the great city, there seems to be a reference to Ezek. v. 11. 12. 13. The ruin of national churches, and the fearful destruction of Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, is pointed out, ver. 19.

The putting down of all rule, and authority, and power, and the demolishing of all empires, kingdoms, and states, seems to be signified, ver. 20. Compare Dan. ii. 35. and vii. 12. And the fearful wrath to come on all that know not God, and obey not the gospel, is pointed out by the exceeding great hail, ver. 21.

Thus by the seventh vial comes all the wrath of God, and the destruction of them that destroyed the earth, when God comes to set up that kingdom which was foretold by Daniel.

In that more particular description of the events of the seventh vial which we have from chap. xix. 11. to chap. xxi. 6. 7. 8. we see how this kingdom comes, with the destruction of the wicked, by several steps. As,

1. The beast is destroyed, and given to the burning flame, or cast into the lake of fire at the coming of Christ; and this is the time of the resurrection of all the saints to reign over the world a thousand years, while Satan is restrained from

tempting and deceiving the nations. This is that season and time for which the lives of the rest of the beasts are prolonged, when their dominion is taken away, Dan. vii. 12. Then it is, that the stone cut out of the mount fills the whole earth, having become a great mountain; and then dominion and glory is given to the likeness of the Son of man, or the church, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him, Dan. vii. 13. 14. 26. 27. And this is the time when the kingdoms of this world become our Lord's and his Christ's, Rev. xi. 15.

2. When Satan is loosed, and makes his last and his greatest and most desperate assault upon the church, in the glorious state of the resurrection, by Gog and Magog, according to Ezek. xxxviii. and when these are destroyed, and cast with Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone; then the kingdom of Christ and his saints are further exalted, in the judging of all the wicked raised from the dead, and brought before the great judge, and all the saints, his assessors, to be judged and condemned. And this is the time of the dead that they shall be judged.

3. When these are cast into the lake of fire, and the wrath of God has taken place fully on all the wicked, then the kingdom of Christ comes to its highest pitch of exaltation, *viz.* to reign over the restored creation, the new heavens and the new earth, and to inherit all things made new, and reign for ever and ever, Rev. xxi. 1. 5. 7. and chap. xxii. 5. Thus when the thousand years are finished, and when the judgment of the beast, and of Gog, and then of every particular wicked person, is over, the kingdom will not be left to other people, but shall stand for ever.

There is a twofold coming of the kingdom of Christ foretold in the Old Testament, and declared in the New. The first was after Christ's coming in the flesh, when he appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and it took place when he arose from the dead, and ascended to his throne on the right hand of God, and received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and erected the general assembly and church of the first-born. Of this first coming of his kingdom, which followed upon his coming the first time, John Baptist, and he himself, in the days of his flesh, preached, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of hea-"ven is at hand." And of this our Lord speaks when he says, "There be some standing here, who shall not taste "death, till they see the Son of man coming in his king-

"dom,"

" dom," Matth. xvi. 28. And the apostle speaks of this, Heb. xii. 28. where he says, " We receiving a kingdom " which cannot be moved, let us hold the grace whereby " we may serve God acceptably;" and Col. i. 13. " Who " hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his " love;" and Rev. i. 9. " Your brother and companion in " tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus " Christ." His kingdom, as it has come the first time, appears in the world, where he rules in the midst of his enemies, after the fashion of his first appearance in the world, in a humbled suffering state. So the Apocalypse represents his subjects in this world, as in a suffering state, and following him as the slain Lamb. And therefore, at best, the times of this first state of Christ's kingdom, are the times of refreshing, or of comfort in the midst of distress and affliction, Acts iii. 19. 20. " Repent ye therefore, and be converted — seeing the times of refreshing have " come from the presence of the Lord, and he hath sent " Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you." These times of refreshing are there distinguished from the times of restitution of all things, which were also foretold by the prophets, and are to take place when Jesus Christ returns from heaven, ver. 21.

As it behoved Jesus Christ himself, according to the prophecies, first to suffer, and then to enter into his glory, when he arose from the dead; so must it be with his kingdom, which, in its first coming, is conformed unto his coming the first time, and will be conformed to his glorious appearing when he comes the second time without sin unto salvation.

This second coming of the kingdom of Christ is declared by our Lord, when speaking of his second coming, Luke xxi. 31. " When ye see these things come to pass, know " ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand;" and by the apostle, 2 Tim. iv. 1. " The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall " judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his " kingdom;" and ver. 18. " The Lord will preserve me " unto his heavenly kingdom." This is that which our Lord sets before his disciples as the gracious reward of their self-denial, and bearing the cross after him, Luke xxii. 28. 29. 30. " Ye are they which have continued with me " in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as " my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and " drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones,

" judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael." Compare Matth. xix. 28. Rev. xx. 4.

Now, it is this coming of the kingdom of Chriſt, and not the firſt, that is ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet, chap. ii. and vii. and by John, in the Revelation, refering to Daniel. For, according to the foreſaid texts in Daniel and the Apocalypſe, it comes at the full end of that kingdom, which is the fourth from Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom; and, according to the deſcription that is given of it, that fourth can be no other but the Roman empire. And this kingdom of Chriſt comes not till that empire be divided and broken: for the ſtone cut out without hands, ſmites the image upon the feet, and ſo becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. This kingdom of the ſaints commences at the deſtruction of the beaſt with the ten horns, after the little horn came up among them, and wore out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and thought to change times and laws, and they were given unto his hand, until the time, times, and the dividing of time.

It is true, the Apocalypſe, chap. xii. repreſents the power of this empire as exerted againſt the church by Satan at the firſt erection of the church; but then it is obſervable, the ten horns were not then crowned; they had received no kingdom as yet, when the power of the empire was at firſt employed againſt Chriſt's kingdom: for the crowns appear then upon the heads, ver. 3. Daniel, in deſcribing the beaſt with the ten horns, makes no mention of the ſeven heads; but John is more particular, and makes the application of Daniel's fourth beaſt to the Roman empire more eaſy, and the knowledge of the times more diſtinct by the ſeven heads; which he makes to ſignify, firſt, the ſeven mountains on which Rome was built, chap. xvii. 9. and then ſeven kings, or ſeven different forms of ſupreme governing power, in the Roman city or commonwealth, ſucceeding one another; whereof five were fallen to make way for the ſixth, which was in being when he wrote; and this was to give place to a ſeventh (the Chriſtian emperor), which was to continue but a ſhort ſpace in compariſon with the ſixth. And when the beaſt gets a deadly wound in this ſeventh head, then the ten kings receive power in the empire as kings; and the beaſt's deadly wound is healed in Antichriſt, who is called the eighth, chap. xvii. 10. 11. 12. Then it is that the beaſt appears with the ten crowns upon his horns, and on his heads the name of blaſphemy, and

makes

makes war with the ſaints from thence forty-two months, or 1260 days, or a time, times, and half a time. This is the beaſt of which Daniel ſpeaks, and this is the time of his reign. And the kingdom of Chriſt which he foretells, does not come, till this time, times, and a half be finiſhed, or till 1260 years after the Roman empire was broken into ten kingdoms. And though the kingdom of the beaſt be greatly diſtreſſed at the end of theſe years, yet he is not fully deſtroyed till the end of the years which Daniel adds to the time, times, and an half, chap. xii. 11. 12. 13. And when the beaſt is fully deſtroyed, then is the beginning of that glorious kingdom of the ſaints foretold by Daniel.

Further, we may obſerve, that as this kingdom will come with the utter deſtruction of the enemies of Chriſt and his ſaints; ſo it will be the reward of all the ſaints, even that ſame recompenſe of which our Lord ſpeaks, Luke xiv. 13. 14. "But when thou makeſt a feaſt, call the poor, the maimed, "the lame, and the blind: and thou ſhalt be bleſſed; for they "cannot recompenſe thee: for thou ſhalt be recompenſed "at the reſurrection of the juſt." This is that reſurrection which is deſcribed, Rev. xx. and called the firſt reſurrection, at the beginning of the ſaints reign: for by it we cannot underſtand, as ſome do, the reſurrection from treſpaſſes and ſins which is ſpoke of Eph. ii. becauſe it is expreſsly declared to be the reſurrection of them who had been ſlain for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God, and who had not worſhipped the beaſt, nor his image, nor received his mark, &c. Theſe are their characters before they ariſe and live to reign; but before men riſe from treſpaſſes and ſins, they are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, wherein in time paſt they walked after the courſe of this world, and the prince of the power of the air.

Neither can this reſurrection be underſtood, as others incline to underſtand it, to be a remarkable revival of the teſtimony and cauſe of the martyrs of Chriſt: for this would turn only to the temporal advantage of ſome ſaints, living this mortal ſinful life on the earth, while the departed ſufferers in former ages are crying, "How long wilt thou not "avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Neither is this opinion conſiſtent with the anſwer given to that cry of the ſouls of the ſlain, wherein their hope is deferred only till the ſufferings of their brethren ſhould be fulfilled: for they muſt all in ſome ſhape or other ſuffer with Chriſt, who are to be glorified together with him at his appearing.

Further,

Further, this reign with Christ, unto which they rise, is that same which is set forth as the hope of the whole redeemed body, when the Lamb takes the book to open it, and loose the seals. Compare Rev. v. 9. 10. with chap. xx. 6. It is the reward of God's *servants the prophets, and the saints, and them that fear his name, small and great*, chap. xi. 18.; and chap. xx. 4. John saw *thrones, and them who sat on them*, (Compare Matth. xix. 28.), *and the souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God*, (which is the designation the Apocalypse gives to them who suffered from the Jews, and from Rome Heathen, before Antichrist was revealed. See chap. vi. 9. and xii. 11.), *and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands*, (which comprehends all the saints that live under Antichrist, to the time of his final destruction); he saw that all these lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years before the resurrection of the rest of the dead. Now, these descriptions comprehend all the saints in all ages, and cannot be confined to them who live in any one period only.

And for this reason, this first resurrection and reign of the saints cannot be understood to be a resurrection only of some eminent sufferers unto death, while the rest of the elect remain in their graves, and those who are living this mortal life, are enjoying a prosperous outward state of Christ's kingdom. As this opinion cannot be reconciled with the foresaid texts; so it is not agreeable to the faith of the primitive Christians on this head, from which there was a remarkable departure when Antichrist's kingdom came: for they believed, that at the destruction of the empire, there would be a resurrection of all the just, and that all the elect should reign with Christ a thousand years before the judgment of the rest of the dead.

Thus when all the church of the redeemed are come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, they will have the dominion over the whole world, and the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall stand for ever.

This is that likeness of the Son of man, which Daniel, in the vision, saw brought near before the Ancient of days, and unto whom dominion, glory, and a kingdom was given, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. For it appears by the application of the description

of

of the *Ancient of days* to Chriſt, Rev. i. 14. that Chriſt himſelf is that Ancient of days: and it was he that appeared of old to the prophets in human likeneſs, and not the Father. And the explication of the viſion to Daniel, makes that *likeneſs of the Son of man*, to whom dominion is given, to be the people of the ſaints of the moſt high ones, Dan. vii. 14. 27. The Ancient of days then in that viſion is Chriſt coming in the glory of his Father, and all the holy angels with him. Their bringing of the *Like unto the ſon of man* near before him, is his ſending his angels, and their gathering his elect together unto him from the four winds, Matth. xxiv. 31. 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 52. And this is the ſtate of the church, when dominion is given to it, at the deſtruction of the beaſt, and when all nations, people, and languages ſhall ſerve it. The likeneſs of a man, with a man's face, joined to the face of the lion, ox, and eagle, upon the body of a man, which is the cherub, is the hieroglyphic of the people of the ſaints of the moſt high ones. This man, united with the moſt high ones, appears to John at the Lamb's taking the book to open it, ſaying, "Thou haſt "redeemed us, and made us to our God kings and prieſts, "and we ſhall reign on the earth." And this is fulfilled in agreeableneſs to Daniel's viſion, Rev. xx. 6. Compare Dan. xii. 12. 13. That it may be given to you and me to have a part in that reſurrection and kingdom, is the deſire of, yours, *&c.*

The

The Two Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth one thousand two hundred and sixty Days, overcome and killed by the Beast, and then reviving at the end of these Days, Rev. xi.

[Written about the year 1737, and now first printed.]

SECT. I.

IT has been observed, by the most noted interpreters of the Revelation, that the forty-two months of the nations their possessing the outer-court, and treading under foot the holy city, and the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the witnesses prophesying, clothed in sackcloth, Rev. xi. 2. 3. are the same number with the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the feeding of the woman in the wilderness, Rev. xii. 6. and with the forty-two months of the beast's making war after his deadly wound was healed, Rev. xiii. 5. and with the time, and times, and half a time, of the nourishing the woman in the wilderness, when she fled from the face of the serpent, who persecuted her after he was cast down to the earth, Rev. xii. 13. 14. And thus the Revelation explains Daniel's *time, and times, and the dividing of time*, Dan. vii. 25. or *time, times, and an half*, Dan. xii. 7. and makes it to be the forty-two months, *i. e.* three years and an half; which, by reckoning thirty days precisely in the month, and three hundred and sixty days in the year, is exactly one thousand two hundred and sixty days. And by bringing the *time, times, and an half* to days, that number is set on a footing with the other two numbers that follow it, Dan. xii. 11. 12.

But it may be a question, If all the forementioned things to which this same number is applied, have their beginning and end exactly together?

The reason of this question is, That *when* the *witnesses*, who *prophesying in sackcloth one thousand two hundred and sixty*

ſixty days, ſhall have finiſhed their teſtimony, the beaſt ſhall make war againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them, Rev. xi. 3. 7.; and after they are killed, *their dead bodies lie in the ſtreet of the great city,—three days and an half,——and they that dwell upon the earth rejoice over them,* Rev. xi. 8. 9. 10. All this, with their reſurrection and exaltation, ver. 11. 12. is before the ſounding of the ſeventh angel, about the end of the time of the ſixth trumpet, which brought the ſecond wo. But it is by the ſounding of the ſeventh angel that the kingdom of the beaſt with ten horns (to which Daniel's time, times, and a half applies) is brought to its end. Yea, the kingdom of that beaſt who makes war by his ten horns forty-two months, is not filled with darkneſs till the fifth vial be poured out on his throne, Rev. xiii. 1. 5. and chap. xvi. 10.; and that vial appears to be in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel.

This difficulty ſeems to have moved the learned and ingenious Joſeph Mede, in his *Clavis Apocalyptica*, to place the end of the beaſt's forty-two months at the end of the ſixth trumpet, and to place all the vials before the end of that trumpet, except the ſeventh, which he makes to coincide with the ſeventh trumpet. And ſo he ſeeks to find the end of the beaſt's reign in the *fall of the tenth part of the city*, Rev. xi. 13.

Yet we muſt rather take the fall of the Greek church and kingdom to be intended in the *falling of the tenth part of the city*, if we conceive this *falling* to have any relation to the buſineſs of the ſixth trumpet; which Mr Mede confeſſes to be the affair of the Turks, by whoſe hand it is certain that church and kingdom fell, which was one of the ten kingdoms at the breaking of the empire. And though it had been ſome way divided from the Roman church, yet there was not enough in that diviſion to ſhew that it was no part of the city; or if there had, it was ſome way united to the Roman church, in the time of the council of Baſil, about fourteen years before it fell.

And if we underſtand the witneſſes to be the Old and New Teſtaments, (which ſhall be afterward conſidered), the fall of the kingdom of the Greeks gave occaſion to the tranſlating and publiſhing of the ſcriptures in the languages of the nations, through the knowledge of the original languages brought into the weſt by thoſe who fled from that overthrow: ſo that theſe witneſſes were exalted beyond the power of the beaſt to overcome them, as he

had done before, when they were ſubdued under the authority of the church, and their teſtimony rendered utterly of none effect to the people of the nations in the council of Baſil. And ſo we may perceive the connection of the exaltation of the witneſſes with the work of the ſixth trumpet, and the fall of the tenth part of the city. But the kingdom of the beaſt was not brought down by the ſixth trumpet, nor by the fall of the tenth part of the city; for what his kingdom loſt on the eaſt ſide, it gained on the weſt, by the conqueſt of America.

Mr Mede likewiſe makes the coming of Chriſt, and the end to be at the beginning of the voice of the ſeventh angel, from Rev. x. 6. 7. But as ὅταν μέλλει σαλπιζειν, is not ſo properly rendered, *when he ſhall begin to ſound*, as *when he ſhall ſound*; ſo we find *days* or different periods under the voice of that angel, which plainly ſignifies, that his ſounding is to bring the end by ſeveral ſucceſſive ſteps; as may may be ſeen in the vials. For it may appear to any who will compare Rev. xi. 15. 19. with Rev. xv. 5. 6. and xvi. 18. 21. that the vials belong to the ſeventh trumpet, even as the trumpets are under the ſeventh ſeal.

Further, he pleads Rev. x. 8. (making it refer to Rev. i. 10. and iv. 1.) for the beginning of another general viſion, like that of the candleſticks, and that of the ſeals, which he calls the viſion or prophecy of the βιβλαριδιον, or *little book*, before the finiſhing of the viſion of the ſealed book, by the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet: though it is manifeſt, that the ſeventh trumpet belongs as much to the ſeventh ſeal as the firſt trumpet does. And thus he interrupts the viſion of the ſealed book, by another general viſion, before it be finiſhed, and ſo breaks the thread that ſerves to lead us through the book of the Revelation. But it is very evident, that theſe words, Rev. x. 8. *And the voice which I heard from heaven ſpake unto me again*, do not refer to chap. i. 10. nor to chap. iv. 1. but to chap. x. 4.; where it is ſaid, *And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me.*

If the little book, that was open in the hand of the angel, who ſware that the end was to come by the ſounding of the ſeventh angel, and in the days of his voice, be not the ſame that was ſealed; it can ſignify nothing more fitly than the New-teſtament ſcripture, that began to be laid open to the view of all, immediately before the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet; and that, after it had been long hid from the people of the nations. For, after John had taken and eaten

eaten it, the angel ſays to him upon it, *Thou muſt propheſy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;* thereby ſignifying, that, as the apoſtles had at firſt preached the goſpel by word of mouth to the nations in their ſeveral languages; ſo they ſhould before the end preach to them again by the book which they wrote, laid open in the ſeveral languages by the tranſlations of it. And ſince that time John propheſies again, by this ſame little book of the Revelation, which is not ſealed, as Daniel's viſion was, becauſe the events which explain it were coming to paſs from the time of his writing it; and in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel, wherein the wo comes on the Antichriſtian world, and the myſtery of God is finiſhed, this ſame book of the Revelation will be clearly explained by the events. But whatever be in this, it plainly creates new difficulties, to ſeek the removal of the firſt, by placing all the vials, except the ſeventh, before the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, as it alſo ſtands on very diſputable and far-fetched interpretations of the ſeveral texts where the foundation for it is ſought. And it is a pity; for, had it not been for this, the *Clavis Apocalyptica* was the exacteſt thing ever was done on the book of the Revelation.

SECT. II.

NOthing could appear more plain than the ſynchroniſm of the treading under foot the holy city; the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth; the woman in the wilderneſs; and the reign of the ten-horned beaſt; to all which the ſame very number is applied. For the forty-two months of the beaſt's reign is the ſame with the time, and times, and half a time of the woman's being nouriſhed in the wilderneſs, whither ſhe fled from the face of the ſerpent; and the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth, is the ſame with the forty-two months, wherein the outer-court is not meaſured, but left out, and given to the nations who tread the holy city under foot. But, notwithſtanding this, and all that is ſaid by Mr Mede to make up this ſynchroniſm, the book of the Revelation manifeſtly directs us to make a twofold application of that ſelf-ſame number. For in chap. xii. (from whence he endeavours to prove this ſynchroniſm), there is a two-

fold flight of the woman into the wilderneſs expreſsly mentioned.

The firſt is ver. 6. where it is ſaid, *And the woman fled into the wilderneſs, where ſhe hath a place prepared of God, that they ſhould feed her there a thouſand two hundred and ſixty days.* This is juſt after her *manchild was caught up unto God and his throne*; *which child* the *red dragon ſought to devour as ſoon as it was born*; even that great *dragon having ſeven heads and ten horns, and ſeven crowns upon his head*, ver. 3. 4. 5. For the ten horns were not yet crowned, as we ſee them afterward, chap. xiii. 1. where the *crowns* are not ſaid to be on their *heads*, one of which, *viz.* the ſeventh or laſt, *is wounded to death*, ver. 3. but upon the *horns*. And this flight of the woman is placed before the *caſting out of the great dragon, that old ſerpent*, from *heaven unto the earth*, ver. 7. 8. 9.; or, (as it is commonly underſtood), before the fall of Heatheniſm in the empire.

The ſecond flight of the woman is thus expreſſed, ver. 14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great "eagle, that ſhe might fly into the wilderneſs, unto her "place; where ſhe is nouriſhed for a time, and times, and "half a time, from the face of the ſerpent." This comes after the dragon is caſt down, as we may ſee by the connection of this verſe with the 12th and 13th verſes immediately foregoing, "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, "and of the ſea; for the devil is come down unto you, "having great wrath, becauſe he knoweth that he hath "but a ſhort time. And when the dragon ſaw that he was "caſt into the earth, he perſecuted the woman which "brought forth the male. And to the woman were given "two wings," *&c.* This ſecond flight then appears to anſwer to the time of the beaſt's living after his deadly wound, and having his ten horns crowned; who after that has power to make war, by theſe his horns, forty-two months, Rev. xiii. 1. 3. 5. with chap. xvii. 12. And as it is only to the ten-horned beaſt, *wearing out the ſaints of the Moſt High, and thinking to change times and laws*, that Daniel applies this number, Dan. vii. 25. which muſt end with his *having accompliſhed to ſcatter the power of the holy people*, (Dan. xii. 7.); ſo we find the number ſet down to this ſecond flight of the woman, juſt as it ſtands in Daniel, *a time, times, and an half*, or *the dividing of time*. And Daniel makes no mention of the ſeven heads

of

of the beaſt with ten horns; but the Revelation adds the heads for making the application clearer. There is therefore no foundation for applying this number, as it ſtands in Daniel, to any things that happened before the crowns were upon the ten horns. But the Revelation goes farther, and not only applies this number, as it ſtands in Daniel, to the beaſt making war by his ten horns, but alſo makes another application of the ſame number to ſomething that happened before the ten horns were crowned, and while the heads were yet crowned; and that is the firſt flight of the woman; which ſeems to coincide with the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth, and the giving of the outer-court to the Gentiles.

If we will not own two flights of the woman, then we ſhould think of a reaſon why her flying into the wilderneſs is mentioned before the caſting down of the ſerpent, as well as after; and this muſt be the reaſon for it, that though the woman's flight did not happen fully and in form, till after the dragon was caſt out into the earth; yet, whereas the firſt beginnings of that evil happened before, therefore her flight is mentioned at the place where theſe beginnings happened. Now, when we admit this, the text ſtill directs us to number one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days from theſe beginnings, as well as ver. 14. directs us to number the *time, times, and a half*, from the flight there deſcribed.

In the time of the prophet Elijah (to whom there is a plain reference in ſome of the things ſaid of the two witneſſes, Rev. xi. 5. 6. *it rained not by the ſpace of three years and ſix months*, Luke iv. 2. 5. James v. 17.; and there is a twofold flight of that prophet into the wilderneſs, where he was fed in an extraordinary manner, recorded in the books of the Kings, 1 Kings xvii. 3. 4. and chap. xix. 1.—8. And there ſeems to be a reference to this twofold flight of Elijah in what the Revelation ſays, firſt and laſt, of the woman flying into the wilderneſs.

The beginning of the *time, times, and an half*, of the ten-horned beaſt's ſcattering the power of the holy people, or of the forty-two months of his making war after the healing of his deadly wound, is fixed by what is ſaid, Rev. xvii. 12. 23. 14. *And the ten horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beaſt. Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength to the beaſt.*

This

This plainly fixes the beginning of the beaſt's reign at the time when the Roman empire was broken into ten kingdoms, or when ten independent kings began to rule in it, after it was wounded to death in its ſeventh head, *viz.* the Chriſtian emperors, which ſucceeded the ſixth, the Heatheniſh emperors. This was the head at the time of John's writing the Revelation, when five heads were fallen, *viz.* kings, conſuls, decemvirs, tribunes of the ſoldiers, and dictators; all of them having had in their turns ſupreme ſovereign power in the Roman city or commonwealth, the capital town whereof was built on ſeven hills, Rev. xvii. 9.—13.

Now, the Roman kingdom was wounded to death in its ſeventh head, and ten kings received power in it, not after the time when Auguſtulus was depoſed by Odoacer, which happened in the year 476: for from that time, the kingdom of the Greeks was but one of ten that were then in the empire; it was now no more the city, but a *tenth part of it.*

The *time, times, and a half,* from the woman's ſecond flight into the wilderneſs, or the forty-two months of the ten-horned beaſt's making war after his deadly wound, may be the time that runs from the blowing of the fifth trumpet, unto the pouring out of the fifth vial on the throne of the beaſt, whereby his kingdom is filled with darkneſs. For if we compare Rev. ix. 1. 2. 4. 11. with chap. xi. 7. and chap. xvi. 10. 11. and chap. vii. 3. and chap. xiii. 2. 4. we may ſee, that it is the kingdom of the beaſt that is intended by the figures uſed chap. ix. 1.—12. and that the fifth trumpet brought him to his throne And perhaps it will be found, that the five months there mentioned, is the time that runs from the beginning of that firſt wo by the blowing of the fifth trumpet, to the beginning of the ſecond wo, by the blowing of the ſixth trumpet, when it is ſaid, *One wo is paſt, i. e.* not ended, but fully gone forth.

Now, ſuppoſing the forty-two months to be 1260 days (as we ſee from Rev. xi. 2. 3.), and taking each of theſe days for a year, according to Numb. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 4. 6. and Dan. ix. 24. 25. 26. we ſhall then ſee, that, as the *time, times, and a half,* or forty-two months, began after the middle of the fifth century, they muſt have their end before the middle of this century that is now running.

The viſion of Daniel, which was *ſhut up,* becauſe it was *for many days,* Dan. viii. 26. points out 2300 days to the *cleanſing*

cleanſing of the ſanctuary that was *made deſolate* by *tranſgreſſion*, ver. 13. 14. And if theſe 2300 days be reckoned (each day for a year) from the time when Daniel had that viſion, the end of them, and the *cleanſing of the ſanctuary* from the *deſolating tranſgreſſion*, will be found to follow hard upon the end of the beaſt's forty-two months, or 1260 days, reckoning from the time of the deadly wound, and of the riſe of the ten kings.

This ſerves not a little to confirm the opinion that the *time, time, and an half* began then; as does alſo the event. For in no time was the dominion of the clergy, in the nations called Chriſtian, through the power of the kings, who once gave them their power, in greater darkneſs and diſtreſs, ſince it had any beginning, than at this day. And if the beginning of the beaſt's forty-two months be not thus certainly fixed by the riſe of the ten kings *who received power as kings one hour with the beaſt*, it ſeems impoſſible to fix it by the book of the Revelation.

And it is no novelty to place the beginning of Antichriſt's reign at the breaking of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms. It is not an opinion taken up after the event happened. For it was held among Chriſtians very long before *, as we may ſee from a paſſage in Tertullian, who wrote at the end of the ſecond century, or the very beginning of the third. He ſpeaks to this purpoſe in his book of the reſurrection of the fleſh, quoting the ſecond chapter of ſecond Theſſalonians. "*Let no man ſeduce you any way;* "*becauſe if there come not a departure firſt* of this king- "dom, to wit, and that *man of ſin be revealed*, that is, An- "tichriſt, *the ſon of perdition, who is oppoſed, and highly* "*extolled againſt all that is called God or religion, ſo that* "*he may ſit in the temple of God, affirming himſelf God. Do* "*not ye remember, that while I was with you, I was ſay-* "*ing theſe things to you? And now ye know what ſhould* "*detain unto his being revealed in his own time: for the* "*ſecret of iniquity is already agitated; only he who now* "*holds, ſhould hold, till he be made out of the way.* Who? "but the Roman ſtate, whoſe departure, diſperſed into ten "kings, ſhall bring on Antichriſt. *And then ſhall be revealed* "*that wicked*; *whom the Lord* Jeſus *ſhall ſlay by the ſpirit* "*of his mouth, and evacuate by the appearance of his coming.*" What he there adds from the Revelation, is very remark-

* See Irenæus adv. hæreſ. lib. v. cap. 25. 26.

able.

able. He ſays, " Likewiſe in the Revelation of John, the " order of the times is laid down, which the ſouls alſo of the " martyrs under the altar, calling for vengeance and judg- " ment, have learned to bear; that the world ſhould firſt " drink out its plagues from the bowls of the angels, " likewiſe that city proſtituted by ten kings, meet with " her deſerved end, and the beaſt, Antichriſt, with his falſe " prophet, give battle to the church; and ſo the devil " being in the mean time confined to the abyſs, the preroga- " tive of the firſt reſurrection ſhould be ordained for them " alone; after that, when he is alſo caſt into the fire, the " cenſure of the univerſal reſurrection ſhould be judged " out of the books."

After the *time, times, and an half*, Daniel mentions 1290 days, to be reckoned *from the time that the daily ſacrifice ſhall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh deſolate ſet up*, Dan. xii. 11. And this is thirty days added to the *time, times, and an half*, which the Revelation makes to be 1260 days. And the addding of forty-five days to the 1290 days, makes up the 1335 days, *at the end* of which Daniel was to *ſtand in his lot*; and *he that waiteth and cometh to theſe*, is *bleſſed*, ver. 12. 13.; even *bleſſed*, as we ſee from Rev. xx. 6. *Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt reſurrection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power; but they ſhall be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand years.* The Revelation makes no mention of any of Daniel's numbers, but the *time, times, and an half;* and yet, by making that to be 1260 days, and fixing the beginning of them, it lays open the whole.

SECT. IV.

BUT we muſt now ſee if any thing can be done toward fixing the beginning of the 1260 days, reckoned from the firſt flight of the woman into the wilderneſs, or from the witneſſes being firſt clothed in ſackcloth, which appears to be the time when *the court which is without the temple began to be left out, and not meaſured*, becauſe it was *given to the nations who ſhall tread the holy city under foot* forty-two months, Rev. xi. 2. 3. with chap. xii. 6.

As we fixed the beginning of the beaſt's *time, times, and a half*, or forty-two months, by what is ſaid of the ten kings their receiving power *one hour with the beaſt;* ſo we

we may now think, if we may receive any direction here from the fall of the tenth part of the city, its being ſaid to be *the ſame hour* with the exaltation of the witneſſes, Rev. xi. 12. 13. *And they heard a great voice from heaven, ſaying unto them* (the witneſſes now revived), *Come up hither. And they aſcended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them. And the ſame hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell.* Though this *ſame hour* ſhould not be allowed to reſpect the killing and revival of the witneſſes, but only their aſcenſion; yet that aſcenſion cannot be ſuppoſed to be very long after the finiſhing of their teſtimony in ſackcloth. And if we underſtand the fall of the tenth part of the city to be the fall of the church and kingdom of the Greeks, as was before ſaid; this may direct us to not far from the end of the 1260 days of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth. And by this means we may gueſs at their beginning. For if we number 1260 days, each day for a year, backward from the middle of the fifteenth century, when the tenth part of the city fell, (for it fell in the year 1453), we ſhall be brought back as far as the ſecond century, and very near the end of it.

But, if it may appear by events about that time, and not long before, that the *court without the temple*, or the outward ſtate and form of the Chriſtian profeſſion, began to be *left out*, as no more anſwering to the ſtandard of God's word, the only rule for meaſuring the court of God's houſe, and the Lord's witneſſes began then to be in ſackcloth, and to propheſy in that cloathing, continuing ſo for the ſpace of 1260 years; and if it can appear, that, at the end of theſe years, the court without the temple appeared any where meaſurable by the proper rule, ſo as it could not be at any time from the beginning of them, and that the witneſſes could then be ſaid to revive after being killed; then we may conclude, that we have found the time of the woman's firſt flight into the wilderneſs. And this may be made appear, after we have firſt ſeen what is to be underſtood by the two witneſſes, of whom it is ſaid, Rev. xi. 3. *And I will give unto my two witneſſes, and they ſhall propheſy a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days clothed in ſackcloth.*

SECT. V.

THere has been nothing ſaid of theſe witneſſes, by the interpreters of the Revelation, that is ſo agreeable, as

the opinion of thoſe who hold them to be the Old Teſtament and the New, teſtifying of Chriſt and his kingdom, in oppoſition to Antichriſt and his kingdom. For they who would have them to be a ſucceſſion of men, teſtifying in the ſeveral ages againſt the corruptions of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, muſt acknowledge, that theſe men witneſſed for Chriſt againſt Antichriſt, only in ſo far as they brought the teſtimony of the Old and New Teſtament ſcriptures againſt him. And even when ſome of them, who are of this opinion, are giving the reaſons why the witneſſes are called two, they plainly tell us, it is becauſe their teſtimony is brought from the two Teſtaments, the Old and the New.

Theſe witneſſes propheſied among the nations which trod the holy city under foot. And however baſe and mournful their appearance was in that ſtate of prevailing corruption, as clothed in ſackcloth; yet they ſtill had ſome place among the nations, and teſtified to them till they were killed by the beaſt, who could not caſt their teſtimony againſt him, and therefore killed them. And when they were killed, the people of the nations would not ſuffer their bodies to be put in graves: for however the beaſt and his company treated the ſcripure-teſtimony, they would never wholly give up with the writings of the Old and New Teſtament. They rendered them of none effect to themſelves, but they would never caſt them off altogether. They extirpated the men who witneſſed againſt their corruptions; nor did they in any ſhape ſuſtain them as witneſſes; but they could not wholly caſt the teſtimony of the Old and New Teſtament; nor was it in their power to alter or corrupt the ſcriptures, even when they corrupted the profeſſion of Chriſtianity to the utmoſt; for the Lord gave unto theſe his witneſſes, and they propheſied even in ſackcloth. And this tormented them that dwelt on the earth, ſo that they rejoiced at the killing of them; while yet they would not ſuffer them to be quite buried out of their ſight.

As the Lord calls them his two witneſſes, ſo we find Jeſus Chriſt appealing to the Old-teſtament ſcriptures, as teſtifying of him, John v. 39. 40. 41. And when the apoſtles foretell the corruption of Chriſtianity, they call Chriſtians to attend to the Old-teſtament ſcriptures, together with the New Teſtament, which they preached, and to keep cloſe by theſe as the great mean of preſervation from that corruption, 2 Tim. iii. 2 Theſſ. ii. 15. 2 Peter iii. 2. 1 John iv. 6. And the Revelation deſcribes the true church by

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the teſtimony of the ſcriptures which they believe, obey, and patiently ſuffer for, Rev. vi. 9. and xii. 1. and xiii. 10. and xiv. 12. and xviii. 20. and xxi. 14.

The concurring teſtimony of the prophets in whom the Spirit of Chriſt teſtified beforehand *the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow*, and of the apoſtles who reported the ſame things, when they preached the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, is full and ſtrong againſt the worldly kingdom of Antichriſt.

The plan of Moſes's houſe in the Old Teſtament, that was built according to the pattern ſhewed in the mount, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken after, and the plan of Chriſt's houſe, that appears in the New Teſtament, as the heavenly thing whereof the former was the example and ſhadow; theſe taken together teſtify, in the ſtrongeſt manner, againſt the Antichriſtian church, as a pretended imitation of the Old-teſtament church, whereby the great deſign of it is oppoſed, and Chriſt's coming in the fleſh is in effect denied, and as the greateſt corruption of the New-teſtament church that can be thought of.

The kingdom of Chriſt, as foretold by the prophets, and clearly declared in the New Teſtament to be the *kingdom of heaven*, and *not of this world*, (though prefigured by the earthly kingdom of the Old Teſtament), manifeſtly ſhews the abomination of the kingdom of Antichriſt, as it ſhews itſelf to be the kingdom of Chriſt, and is indeed the very oppoſite of it.

Thus the two churches, the old and the new, as appearing together in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, are ſtanding witneſſes againſt the Antichriſtian church in all its ſhapes, and againſt its whole conſtitution. It is true, they plead conformity to the Old-teſtament church, as worldly, and with this view they would have the New Teſtament church to be the ſame with the Old: but theſe two witneſſes taken together, and concurring as they ſtand in the ſcriptures, confound them with their teſtimony. *Theſe are the two olive-trees*; for the olive-tree is the emblem of the church, Rom. xi. 17.; and the Spirit of Chriſt, that holy oil, is conveyed by the ſcriptures that were inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, who is the ſtrength of the true church, as is ſaid to Zechariah in the explication of the viſion, with reſpect to the building of the houſe of God, Zech. iv. 1.—6. *This is the word of the*

Lord unto Zerubbabel, ſaying, Not by might, (or army), *nor by power, but by my ſpirit, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* Compare 1 John iv. 5. Or, if the *two ſons of oil* be the cherubs, which, in Solomon's temple, were of *olive-tree*, or trees of oil, 1 Kings vi. 23. a cherub was an emblem of the church, as we may ſee from Rev. v. 8. 9. *And theſe are the two candleſticks ſtanding before the God of the earth.* The Revelation makes a golden candleſtick an emblem of the church, chap. i. 20. Zechariah mentions but one in his viſion; but John ſpeaks of two; for now both the churches, the old and the new, appear ſet forth in the Old and New Teſtament, teſtifying for Chriſt againſt Antichriſt.

Both the Old Teſtament ſcriptures and the New, which teſtify of Chriſt, propheſy much of Antichriſt; and their propheſying is verified in him, even as the unbelieving Jews verified the prophecies, in the oppoſition they made to Chriſt in his miniſtry among them, and in their putting him to death. And from the time when this melancholy affair of Antichriſt had any remarkable beginnings, till it came to its height, and till it came to do its utmoſt againſt Chriſt, and before any effectual oppoſition began to be made to it, the witneſſes may be ſaid to have been propheſying in ſackcloth, as their words were verified in a grievous lamentable manner.

SECT. VI.

NOW let us ſee how theſe two witneſſes came to be clothed in ſackcloth, and to propheſy in ſackcloth, from about the latter end of the ſecond century.

1. About that time the goſpel began to be taught *in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth.* For then they began to explain the ſcripture-doctrine, according to the rules of the philoſophy that was taught among the Gentiles. This came in form, firſt at Alexandria, where Pantænus, the Stoic philoſopher, taught a Chriſtian ſchool of learning. His diſciple and ſucceſſor was Clemens of Alexandria, who, in the firſt and ſixth books of his *Stromata*, ſets forth the uſefulneſs and advantage of philoſophy, in the illuſtration and defence of the truth of the goſpel, to which it paves the way, in oppoſition to ſome, whom he complains of as finding fault with it. And he tells them very wittily, that, if it be uſeful to demonſtrate the uſeleſſneſs of philoſophy,

ſophy, then certainly philoſophy is uſeful ; and that the philoſophy of the Greeks muſt be demonſtrated to be unprofitable, not by words only, but by the experience and knowledge of it. He uſes ſtrange allegories, to ſhew how it ſerves to make us wiſe ; and he alledges it is uſeful to prove in divers ways what is advanced, and brings admiration to the catechumens, and deduces the chief doctrines, drawing along with it the perſuaſion of the hearers. And from its neceſſity in refuting the fallacious opinions of the ſophiſts, philoſophy appears to him to be the gift of God ; not indeed the Stoic, nor Platonic, or Epicurean, and Ariſtotelian philoſophy ; but whatſoever thing was right ſaid by theſe ſects, teaching righteouſneſs with pious knowledge ; all this ſelected, he calls philoſophy, and ſays, that the philoſophy of the Greeks has extracted a portion of eternal truth from theology. And whatever was amiſs among the Greek philoſophers, yet true philoſophy derived its truth from Chriſt himſelf. And to the objection from Paul's epiſtles, he anſwers, that Paul does not condemn philoſophy ; but only ſhews that he who is a partaker of the height of knowledge, needs not return any more to the Grecian philoſophy, as being that which ſome way taught the elements, and a diſcipline going before the truth.

Thus did Clemens reconcile his philoſophy to theſe words of Paul, Col. ii. 8. *Beware, leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments* (or elements) *of the world, and not after Chriſt.* Now, we may ſee what account Paul makes of the wiſdom of the diſputer of this world, which the Greeks ſought after, from the firſt and ſecond chapters of his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, where he ſhews, from what had happened in the world, and was manifeſt from experience, how uſeleſs the wiſdom, both of the Jewiſh ſcribe, and of the Grecian diſputer, had been as to the true knowledge of God ; and inſtead of its ſubſerviency to the wiſdom of God revealed in the goſpel, he ſets forth the oppoſition betwixt the two, and demonſtrates it by experience, and by the nature of the thing.

And indeed this oppoſition ſhewed itſelf, as ſoon as they began to teach the goſpel in the wiſdom of words, or the words of man's wiſdom ; notwithſtanding all the pains they took to reconcile them, and to ſhew the ſubſerviency of the one to the other. For they darkened the glory of the perſon of Chriſt, the Λογος, or *Word*, revealed

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in the goſpel, by the maxims of the Platonic philoſophy *; and they made void the goſpel-revelation of God's grace, by advancing human merit, and the power of man's will to do good. Something of this is to be ſeen in the writings of the firſt Chriſtian philoſopher, whoſe books have remained, *viz.* Juſtin Martyr, who wrote as far back as the middle of the ſecond century. But it came in form, when a Chriſtian philoſophy began to be taught at Alexandria, in the end of that century. The famous Origen ſucceeded Clemens there, and the ſame ſchool at length produced Arius, who gave occaſion to the wiſdom of the diſputer of this world, the wiſdom of words to diſplay itſelf at large upon the deep things of God; and this came to an intolerable height at laſt in the ſcholaſtic divinity. It is remarkable, that in the diſputes with the Huſſites in the council of Baſil, the wiſe doctors diſtinguiſhed and argued till they brought forth this concluſion, *That the biſhops decrees in councils are God's public inſpired word* †. Thus was the goſpel, which is declared in the ſcriptures, ſerved at laſt by its pretended handmaid. This was no doubt far from the thoughts of Clemens, when he inſiſted on the neceſſity of the philoſophic art of arguing and refuting; but here it landed at laſt.

Theſe firſt Chriſtian philoſophers thought it was an advantage to the goſpel to put it in the philoſophic dreſs: for they found it recommended the ſcriptures to the world, to be thus defended and explained. But this was to clothe them in ſackcloth, inſtead of the native and ſimple, but divine dreſs wherein the goſpel appeared; indeed *fooliſhneſs and weakneſs* to the unbelieving Greeks and Jews; but unto them who were *called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, whoſe fooliſhneſs is wiſer than men.* What Clemens ſays of the uſefulneſs of philoſophy in bringing the *admiration* of the catechumens, may be underſtood of bringing them to admire their wiſe teachers; but the goſpel taught by the apoſtles, brought them to admire *Jeſus Chriſt, who of God is made wiſdom to the fooliſh things of this world, for the confounding of the*

* The ſtyle of the Antenicene fathers, from the time of Juſtin Martyr, differs as much from the ſimple ſtyle of the ſcriptures, concerning the perſon of Chriſt, as it does from the metaphyſical ſtyle of the Poſtnicene fathers.

† Baxter's hiſtory of councils.

wiſe;

wiſe; that he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord. And his ſaying, that philoſophy draws along with it the perſuaſion of the hearers, while it deduces the doctrines of the goſpel, may be compared with the apoſtle's words, "I "came not with excellency of ſpeech, or of wiſdom, de- "claring unto you the teſtimony of God. For I deter- "mined not to know any thing among you, ſave Chriſt, "and him crucified. And my ſpeech and my preaching "was not with enticing words of man's wiſdom, but in "demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power; that your "faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the "power of God."

Though this teſtimony of the apoſtle be clear, and very ſtrong againſt a philoſophical goſpel, and a philoſophical faith; yet nothing will perſuade men againſt their intereſt. For the ambitious teachers could not make their own gain of the goſpel in the apoſtle's way of it, as they could do when they began to diſpenſe it by the philoſophical meaſure. For about this time began that merchandiſe that came to its height in Babylon, but took place firſt by the opening of the third ſeal. This may alſo appear further by the inſtances that follow.

2. About this ſame time, tradition was ſet up as the rule of faith, together with the ſcriptures. We have an account of this, with ſome of the effects of it, from Tertullian, who wrote then, and pleaded for it. He ſays, in his book *De corona militis*, "Even in the plea of tradi- "tion, you will ſay written authority is to be demanded. "Therefore let us inquire, if unwritten tradition be not "to be received? We ſhall plainly deny that it is to be "received; if our judgment be not already determined "by the obſervation of other things, which, without any "evidence of the ſcripture, we vindicate only by the title "of tradition, and by the authority of cuſtom. To be- "gin then with baptiſm, when going to the water, but "alſo ſome time before in the church, under the hand of "the prieſt, we confeſs, that we renounce the devil, and "his pomp, and his angels; then we are thrice dipt, an- "ſwering ſomething more than the Lord hath determined "in the goſpel. Being taken from thence, we firſt taſte "the concord of milk and honey; and from that day we "abſtain from the daily bathing for a whole week. The "ſacrament of the euchariſt which was appointed by the "Lord, both in meal-time, (*i. e.* ſupper-time), and to all,

"we

" we even take in our meetings before day-light, and " from the hand of none but the preſidents.——We make " oblations on a ſet day, once a-year, for the dead, " for the birthdays. On the Lord's day we hold it " unlawful to faſt, or worſhip kneeling. We enjoy the " ſame immunity from the feaſt of Paſch to Pentecoſt. We " are very careful that nothing of our cup or bread fall " to the ground. At every progreſs and promotion, at " every coming in and going out, at putting on our " cloaths and ſhoes, at the baths, at the tables, at the " lights, at beds, at ſeats, where-ever our converſation exer- " ciſes us, we wear our brow with the ſign of the croſs. " If you demand a rule of the ſcripture for theſe and other " ſuch like uſages, you ſhall find none. Tradition will be " given you for the author, cuſtom the confirmer, and " faith the obſerver. You ſhall either yourſelf ſee the " *reaſon* that will patronize *tradition, cuſtom, faith,* or you " ſhall learn it from ſome body that has ſeen it. Mean " time you will believe there is ſome tradition to which " compliance is due."

The true reaſon for ſuch uſages coming in, and being obſerved in the churches, ſeems to be the admiſſion of the Gentiles, before they were ſufficiently purged from the Heatheniſh ſuperſtition; who, though they renounced the Heathen deities, yet leavened the profeſſion of Chriſtianity with the ſuperſtitious leaven of their education. Dupin, ſpeaking of the diſcipline before Conſtantine, would have us believe, " they prayed for the dead, and made obla- " tions for them, and celebrated the ſacrifice of the maſs, " in commemoration of them." But if Tertullian's " ma- " king oblations on a ſet day, once a-year, for the dead, " for the birthdays," be taken to ſignify their ſolemniſing the day of the death of the martyrs, as their birthday; then this, which it ſeems had come to ſome head in Tertullian's time, may be traced as far back as the martyrdom of Polycarp, which happened in the year 167, deſcribed in the epiſtle of the church of Smyrna to thoſe of Pontus; where, ſpeaking of the Heathens, who would not ſuffer the Chriſtians to carry off his body entire, leſt they ſhould adore it inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt, they ſay, " Fools as they were, they " did not know that the Chriſtians worſhip none but Jeſus " Chriſt, becauſe he is the Son of God; and only ho- " nour the martyrs, who are his diſciples and followers, " becauſe of the love which they teſtify to have for their " King

" King and Master. The centurion having caused the " body of this martyr to be burnt, the Christians car- " ried away his bones, being more valuable than the most " precious stones, and more pure than gold; which they " buried in a place, where they assembled together, to " celebrate with joy and chearfulness the day of his mar- " tyrdom; thus honouring the memory of those that have " *fought gloriously for the defence of their religion*, and to " confirm and instruct others by such examples."

This, which began at that time to slip in with these pretences, was come a good length in Tertullian's time, when this egg was hatched, out of which came at last the whole superstition and idolatry of the Roman church. But they had not a thought yet of defending the Christian profession by the sword, for which some now plead scripture. They rather animated the disciples to the defence of their religion in the way of suffering unto death, by flattering their pride with the hope of an annual day to be observed to their honour. Though this was another kind of hope than that which Christ sets before his followers in the gospel, and indeed a worldly hope; yet it demonstrates, that they were very far from thinking, that the gospel injoined them to sell their garments, and buy swords to defend Christ's kingdom. Far less did they imagine that it was any point of their religion *to force religion*; though they were a great body of men in Tertullian's time, who says, in his Apology against the Gentiles, " We have been but a little time in " the world, yet we are to be met with in all places: you " may find us in the cities, in the villages, in the armies, " in the courts of justice, in the senate, and in the markets. " We have left you only your temples to yourselves. " What wars might not we be capable of undertaking? and " with what resolution might not we carry them on, though " we had not near so many troops as you, (we who die " daily with so much joy), were it not a law amongst us, " *To suffer ourselves rather to be killed, than to kill others.*"

From this it appears manifestly, that the beast's reign was not yet begun. But it is evident from Tertullian, that tradition was then tacked to the scriptures, as the rule of faith and religion: and thus the witnesses were in sackcloth. We see from Acts chap. xv. how the Christians of the Gentiles were like to be imposed on by a pretended tradition from the apostles, while they were yet living. And this was the reason of their beginning to write the

New Teſtament. But the joining of tradition with it, after it was completely written, ſerved at laſt to render it as much of none effect, as the Jews, in our Lord's time, made the Old-teſtament ſcriptures of none effect to themſelves by their tradition. Tradition joined with the ſcriptures, debaſes them exceedingly; and, as it croſſes the end for which they were written, cannot but render them of none effect when it comes to its perfection, as it did at laſt when the beaſt overcame and killed the witneſſes.

3. About this time alſo the authority of ſynods and councils began to ſhew itſelf. Dupin's report concerning this may be credited. He ſays, "The firſt councils that are "mentioned in antiquity, are thoſe which were held un- "der the pontificate of Pope Victor, to adjuſt the celebra- "ted controverſy about keeping Eaſter; and ſome others "that were aſſembled, almoſt at the ſame time, to ſup- "preſs the growing faction of the Montaniſts. Euſebius "mentions the laſt in the fifth book of his hiſtory, chap. "15.; and Tertullian aſſures us, that, in his time, the "Montaniſts alſo met together for themſelves."

This Victor was biſhop of Rome, from the year 192 to 201. The ſynod called by him, excommunicated the biſhops of Aſia, becauſe they would not celebrate Eaſter on the ſame day with them. Here was a ſubject for the authority of ſynods and councils, which from henceforth pretended to determine the ſenſe of ſcripture, and to make deciſions and regulations, where the ſcripture made none. The churches, before the time of Victor, though peſtered with hereſies, did not think, it ſeems, of any warrant in the law of Chriſt for ſynods, which have been ſince that time judged ſo neceſſary a mean for ſuppreſſing hereſy. The argument for theſe conventions of the clergy from Acts xv. is an after-thought, that came in to excuſe or juſtify them, when the evils occaſioned by them might put men upon demanding their inſtitution.

But it is ſtrange, if the firſt Chriſtians had apprehended any warrant there for ſynods, that, notwithſtanding all the uſe they had for them, they never put them in practice from the year 51, (when the fact narrated Acts xv. is ſuppoſed to have happened), till Victor's time, *i. e.* for near an hundred and fifty years. Clemens Romanus wrote to the church of Corinth on a ſubject, whereon a ſynod in Achaia might have been ſuppoſed very neceſſary; yet there is no mention in all his epiſtles of any ſuch thing. And, though

though he makes mention of the order of the church and its officers, the bishops or elders, and the deacons, and proposes remedies for the disorder made by the faction at Corinth, which had prevailed to the deposing of their elders, he never speaks of this remedy; yea, he does not so much as suppose, that the church of Corinth had not power to do what they did, provided they had done it upon sufficient grounds.

Ignatius indeed presses subjection and submission to the one bishop in every church, and the presbytery subordinated to him, as the apostles to Christ, in opposition to schism and heresy. And as Clemens speaks of a controversy about the name of the episcopacy, or bishop's office, in the foresight of which, he says, the apostles appointed the two orders of bishops and deacons, according to Is. lx. 17. Ignatius, on the other side, distinguishes the one bishop from the presbytery, as well as from the deacons, and he magnifies his office, and extols his authority very highly; but he is perfectly silent about the authority of bishops met in council; and his bishop's authority went not beyond a single congregation, coming together in one place to the Lord's supper, according to that famous saying, *One bishop, and one altar* *.

If his epistles be not interpolated, where they speak in so high a strain of the bishop, and so differently from the scripture, without being backed by the authors of the second century, (except we would give credit to the romantic Hegesippus, and to lists that place Clemens in a succession of such bishops, contrary to his own foresaid doctrine), we may suppose this to be the first notable fruit of the *working* of the *mystery of iniquity* in the apostolic churches. And it is easy to perceive how it made way for synods and councils of bishops, of which Ignatius speaks nothing; nor Justin Martyr, from whom we have very particular and circumstantiate information of the primitive church-order: nor can it be found in any credible authors, that

* It is acknowledged there were several churches under one bishop in Alexandria and Rome, in the third century; and King makes them but like chapels of ease. But from the beginning it was not so: for no more can be inferred from Eusebius, saying, that Mark planted the churches of Alexandria, but that before the time of Eusebius there had been churches a long time in Alexandria, where Mark first preached the gospel.

the conventions called ſynods, were held to condemn heretics before the time of Victor.

In his time then we may fix the beginning of that which had ſome increaſe after the middle of the third century, when the power even of a Heathen emperor (like a prelude) ſomeway ſeconded the ſentence of a ſynod againſt Paulus Samoſatenus. But the authority of ſynods and councils diſplayed itſelf more fully under Conſtantine, when ſupported by his authority; and then they became more ſtated, and duly ſubordinate, according to the ſituation of the empire and its provinces. Nor did the ſynodical authority fail with the emperors, but grew, and prevailed *, till it came to its height in the councils of Conſtance † and Baſil.

SECT. VII.

NOW, when philoſophy and tradition, and the authority of ſynods and councils, came in to regulate the religion revealed in the ſcriptures, then the court which is without the temple, could no longer be meaſured by the word of God, the only rule of meaſuring his houſe; and then the woman firſt fled into the wilderneſs.

The twenty years of peace and freedom from open perſecution in the reign of Commodus, and the firſt ten years of Severus, while the Chriſtian leaders were endeavouring to adapt the Chriſtian profeſſion to the Gentiles, gave occaſion to a prodigious multiplication of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; ſo that in the third century, ſome ſay, more than one half of the Roman empire became Chriſtians.

If this had been owing merely to the influence of the goſpel itſelf, it was far greater now than in the time of the apoſtles. But there is ſome ground to ſuſpect, that it was as much owing unto the accommodating of the goſpel to the Gentiles, as to the bringing of them to conformity to Jeſus Chriſt by the power of the goſpel.

The wiſdom of the diſputer of this world, which the Greeks ſought after, and could not find in the apoſtolic preaching, ſerved now to recommend it to the philoſophers,

* Prevailed to excommunicate kings.

† The council of Conſtance confeſſed that communion in both kinds was both commanded by Chriſt, and practiſed by the primitive church, but yet for all this forbade it. *Catal. Teſt. verit.*

who

who could not bear the daſh that was given to the pride of knowledge by the goſpel, as preached by the apoſtles.

And Heatheniſh-like rites admitted into the Chriſtian worſhip, to give it more ſolemnity, and turn it off from the primitive deſpiſed ſimplicity, may be ſuppoſed to have taken out of the way ſomewhat of the offence that the nations at firſt took at the Chriſtian inſtitution.

There was ſomething very extraordinary in the ſufferings of the firſt Chriſtians, who followed Chriſt patiently and joyfully bearing his reproach, looking to the hope that he ſet before them; which was a great confirmation of the truth of the goſpel: ſo that even ſome of the philoſophers owned themſelves overcome by it. But the religious honours now done to the martyrs after their death, as it ſerved to weaken this evidence, ſo it could not miſs to draw ſome to be confeſſors and ſufferers who were not ſo much minding the honour that comes from God only.

And the liberal alms of the firſt Chriſtians might draw ſome poor and deſperate to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, who were not ſeeking after the true riches; but when the Chriſtians began to look like a riſing party, that deſigned to make a figure in this world, many worldly men would look after it.

But that which we are eſpecially to conſider here, is, the doctrine of merit and the power of man's will to do good, that now came to be reckoned not inconſiſtent with the goſpel of the grace of God; which, as it was preached by the apoſtles, and profeſſed by the firſt Chriſtians, was the moſt oppoſite doctrine to human merit that ever appeared in the world; ſo that nothing but the power of God could engage men, and eſpecially theſe ſons of pride the philoſophers, to embrace it. The ſenſe of the primitive and truly apoſtolic Roman church upon this great point, is thus expreſſed in the epiſtle to the Corinthians written by Clemens. "They all then [Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob] were "glorified and magnified, not by themſelves, or their "works or juſt actions which they did, but by his will. So "likewiſe we, who are called by his will in Chriſt Jeſus, "are not made juſt * by ourſelves, nor by our own wiſ-

"dom,

* To *juſtify* in ſcripture-ſtyle, and in the ſtyle of Clemens, is either to *make one juſt* who was unjuſt, or to *declare one juſt* who is ſo already. And ſo the epiſtles of Paul and James taken together teach us,

" dom, or underſtanding, or piety, or works, which we " have wrought in holineſs of heart, but by the faith, by " which the almighty God hath made all thoſe juſt who " have been from the beginning; to whom be glory for ever " and ever, *Amen.* What then ſhall we do, brethren? ſhall " we ceaſe from well-doing and forſake charity? May the " Lord in nowiſe ſuffer this to be done by us; but let us " ſtudy with diligence and alacrity of mind to perfect every " good work."

But when this grand ſtumbling-block began to be taken out of the way; we know that mankind will go into the ſtricteſt form of religion to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs. And when they found that Chriſtianity admitted of glorying in their own merit, no wonder if they preferred the Chriſtian inſtitution to the common Heatheniſh ones.

The acceſs to the churches was not yet ſo open and eaſy as it became afterward; but it ſeems now to have been turned ſomewhat off from the apoſtolic footing. It is true, they who were to be admitted to communion in the churches, paſſed through the ſtate of catechumens, went through more forms, and gave more proofs of outward reformation of manners, before they were admitted, than in the time of the apoſtles, when they were received, upon the firſt appearance of the grace of God bringing them to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God, and to glory only in the croſs of Chriſt, with brotherly love, and lively hope of eternal life through his reſurrection from the dead. And this grace of God, upon its firſt appearance in them, ſhewed itſelf, teaching them to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts; but now they looked more after human merit and a good character in the world for church-members, than the appearance of the grace of God in them.

We have already ſeen what Tertullian ſays of the number of Chriſtians in his days *; and may now conſider what is ſaid by Dupin concerning Decius's perſecution in the middle of the third century, *i. e.* about fifty years after. " As there

us, " That a man who is made juſt by the faith without works, is " by works declared to be juſt, and not by believing only." So Clemens, in this ſame epiſtle, uſes the word *juſtify* for *declaring us to be juſt*, when he ſays, " Being juſtified by works, and not by words." But here, in this paſſage, it muſt ſignify *to make us juſt.*

* That ſaying of Tertullian is famous, *O miſeros nos qui Chriſtiani dicimur hoc tempore: Cernes agimus ſub nomine Chriſti.*

" were,"

" were," ſays he, " at that time, a great number of Chri-
" ſtians, and the church had gathered ſtrength during the
" peace; ſo there were abundance of martyrs: but that peace
" having likewiſe produced a great many bad Chriſtians *,
" there were abundance of them who either voluntarily re-
" nounced the religion of Jeſus Chriſt, or ſunk under the
" apprehenſion of the rigour of their tortures."

The admitting of theſe again too eaſily, when they returned after the perſecution was over, occaſioned the ſchiſm or hereſy (as they call it) of Novatian; and the diſputes about this, with the length Novatian carried his ſide of the queſtion, ſerved to make the churches more and more acceſſible to the Gentiles, and upon eaſier terms.

But let us next hear Euſebius, ſpeaking in his hiſtory (book 8. *init.*) concerning the ſtate of the Chriſtian profeſſion before the perſecution of Diocleſian. The paſſage is thus in Hanmer's tranſlation.

" How great, and what manner of glory and liberty the
" doctrine of piety due unto almighty God, preached in
" this world by Chriſt, hath obtained before the perſe-
" cution of our time, among all mortal men, both Grecians
" and Barbarians, it requireth a greater labour to declare,
" than eaſily for the worthineſs thereof may be accompliſh-
" ed of us. We have ſufficient tokens thereof, in that the
" clemency of the emperors towards the Chriſtians was ſo
" increaſed; to whom alſo they committed the government
" of the Gentiles; and for the great favour they bare to our
" doctrine, they granted liberty and ſecurity to the profeſ-
" ſors of Chriſtian religion. What ſhall I ſay of them, who
" in the very palace of the emperors, and in the preſence
" of princes, lived moſt familiarly? which eſteemed of their
" miniſters ſo highly, that they granted them in their pre-
" ſence freely to deal in matters of religion, both by word
" and deed, together with their wives, and children, and ſer-
" vants: and not only this, but alſo permitted them to glory
" and boaſt of the liberty of their faith; whom alſo they
" deemed worthy of more credit, and far better eſtimation
" than their fellow-ſervants. —— After which ſort a man
" might then have ſeen the biſhops of all churches in great
" reverence and favour among all ſorts of men, and with

* *Diſciplinam quam apoſtoli tradiderant, otium jam et pax longa corruperat: ſtudebant augendo patrimonio ſinguli, &c.* Cyprian. de lapſis.

" all

" all magiſtrates. Who can worthily deſcribe thoſe innumer-
" able heaps and flocking multitudes throughout all cities
" and famous aſſemblies, frequenting the places dedicated
" unto prayer? becauſe of which circumſtances, they, not
" contented with the old and ancient buildings (which
" could not receive them), have, throughout all cities, build-
" ed them from the foundation, wide and ample churches.
" Theſe things thus prevailed in proceſs of time, and daily
" increaſed far and nigh, ſo that no malice could intercept,
" no ſpiteful friend bewitch, no wight with ſubtil ſleight
" hinder at all, as long as the divine and heavenly hand of
" God upheld and viſited his people, whom as yet he
" worthily accepted. But after that our affairs, through
" too much liberty, eaſe, and ſecurity, degenerated from the
" natural rule of piety; and after that one purſued another
" with open calumny and hatred; and when that we impugn-
" ed ourſelves by no other than ourſelves, with the armour
" of ſpite and ſharp ſpears of opprobrious words; ſo that
" biſhops againſt biſhops, and people againſt people, raiſed
" ſedition: laſt of all, when that curſed hypocriſy and diſ-
" ſimulation had ſwam even to the brim of malice, the
" heavy hand of God's high judgment, after his wonted
" manner, (whilſt as yet the eccleſiaſtical companies aſſem-
" bled themſelves nevertheleſs), began ſoftly by little and
" little to viſit us; ſo that the perſecution that was raiſed
" againſt us, took its firſt original from the brethren,
" which were under banner in the camp. Whereas we were
" touched with no ſenſe or feeling thereof, neither went a-
" bout to pacify God; we heaped ſin upon ſin, thinking,
" like careleſs Epicures, that God neither cared nor would
" viſit our ſins. And they which ſeemed our ſhepherds,
" laying aſide the rule of piety, practiſed contention and
" ſchiſm among themſelves. And whilſt they aggravated
" theſe things, that is, contentions, threatening mutual
" hatred and enmity, and every one proceeded in ambition
" much like tyranny itſelf, then, I ſay, then the Lord, ac-
" cording to the ſaying of Jeremy, made the daughter of
" Zion obſcure."

Was not the woman then fled into the wilderneſs, and the holy city trodden under foot of the nations, even before the time of Conſtantine, when it came in greater perfection? And, when the ſaints who ſuffered death for the word of God, and the teſtimony which they held under Dioclesian's perſecution, were taken from among them, were not

the

the Chriſtian paſtors, and people very well prepared before Conſtantine, for the ſtate of Chriſtianity that took place in his day?

We have ſome view of Conſtantine, and likewiſe of the Novatians, from a ſtory that Socrates Scholaſticus tells of a converſation that happened between him and one Aceſius, thus: "Becauſe he greatly reſpected the unity and concord "in eccleſiaſtical affairs, he ſummoned Aceſius biſhop of the "Novatian ſect to the council. And after the determina- "tion of the council touching the faith, was both laid "down in writing, and ratified with the ſeveral ſubſcriptions "of all their hands, the Emperor demanded of Aceſius, "whether he would aſſent unto the ſame faith, and alſo "unto the canon concluded upon touching the obſervation "of the feaſt of Eaſter? who made anſwer, The council "(O Emperor) hath concluded and declared no new thing: "for I have learned of old, that even from the beginning, "and in the apoſtolic times themſelves, the ſelf-ſame faith "was retained, and the ſame time for the celebration of "Eaſter was obſerved. Again, when the Emperor demand- "ed of him the cauſe, why he ſevered himſelf from the "communion of the faithful; he alledged for himſelf, ſuch "things as had happened under the reign of Decius, and "about the perſecution of that time; as alſo he brought "forth the preciſe obſervation of a certain ſevere canon, "*viz.* That ſuch as after baptiſm, through frailty of the "fleſh, had fallen into that kind of ſin which holy ſcripture "termeth the ſin unto death, ſhould not be partakers of "the holy myſteries, but exhorted unto repentance, and "that they ſhould wait for the remiſſion of ſin, to proceed, "not of the prieſts, but of God himſelf, who both can, and "is of power ſufficient to remit ſin. The which when "Aceſius had uttered, the Emperor ſaid unto him again, "Provide thee a ladder, O Aceſius, and climb alone into "heaven."

SECT. VIII.

IF it may appear, from what has been ſaid, that we may look as far back as the latter end of the ſecond century, for the firſt flight of the woman into the wilderneſs, and the beginning of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth; then we may proceed to look again toward the middle of the fif-

teenth century, and ſee what we can find there like the death and reſurrection of the witneſſes.

The iſſue of that great confuſion occaſioned by the condemnation of Wickliff's doctrine, and by the burning of John Huſs and Jerom of Prague, who were delivered over to the ſecular arm by the council of Conſtance, is thus narrated by Dupin.

" The council (of Baſil) ſent deputies thither (to Bo-
" hemia), to try whether they might not be brought to an
" accommodation. They entered into negotiation with
" the nobility, which made the Taborites and Orphans ſu-
" ſpect them. The nobility, on the other hand, being re-
" ſolved to ſhake off the yoke of Procopius and the Ta-
" borites, made war upon them. The Taborites and Or-
" phans were defeated, Procopius killed, and Sigiſmond
" acknowledged king of Bohemia. After this, the deputies
" of the council made a treaty with the Bohemians and
" Moravians, by which they agreed to unite to the church,
" and conform to its rites in every thing, except com-
" munion in both kinds; and agreed, that ſuch as had been
" uſed to communicate ſo, might continue. Rokſana, in
" the name of the clergy, promiſed to obey the Pope, and
" received abſolution from the deputies of the council.
" After this the Emperor Sigiſmond made his entry into
" the city of Prague in September 1436, and the ceremonies
" of the church of Rome were again ſet up in the churches.

" The council of Baſil made a decree in the 30th ſeſſion,
" which was held on the 22d of December 1437, touch-
" ing communion in both kinds, by which they declared,
" *That believers who communicate, are not obliged by divine*
" *right to communicate in both kinds; and that it is the bu-*
" *ſineſs of the church to determine in what manner the com-*
" *munion ought to be adminiſtered; that Jeſus Chriſt is*
" *wholly in each kind; and that the cuſtom of communicating*
" *in one kind cannot be condemned.*

" However the Bohemians kept up the cuſtom of com-
" municating in both kinds. Rokſana, archbiſhop of Prague,
" and Pogebrac, who had made himſelf maſter of the king-
" dom of Bohemia, kept it, at the ſame time that they *ex-*
" *terminated* the Taborites."

Thus ended that remarkable *torment* which *they who dwell on the earth* had by the ſcriptures, the witneſſes, who may be ſaid to have been killed by the beaſt, in that decree of the council of Baſil, as being abſolutely ſubdued under the authority

thority of the church ſupported with ſecular perſecuting power. The contending parties were reconciled, as Herod and Pontius Pilate at the death of Chriſt. They ſubmitted to the church, at the ſame time that they *exterminated* ſuch as were reſolute to ſtand againſt the authority of the church, for the teſtimony of the witneſſes. And the church in return complimented them with liberty to communicate in both kinds. Here was ſome ſhew of a regard to the witneſſes, in their inſiſting on this, and perſevering thus to communicate; but they took a licence for it from the church: ſo that, even in this, the authority of the witneſſes was ſwallowed up by the church, or they lay killed by the beaſt. Though perhaps, in this alſo, we may perceive ſomething of *the people of the nations not ſuffering their dead bodies to be put in graves*, even while they were *making merry and ſending gifts one to another* upon their death. Thus ended the famous ſtrife among *them that dwell upon the earth*, wherein the authority of the beaſt, and of the Lord in the teſtimony of his witneſſes, was come to the moſt evident and higheſt competition. But let us hear what follows in Dupin.

" There remained however ſeveral perſons tainted with " their (the Taborites) maxims, who ſeparated from the " Calixtines, and made a new ſect, which went by the name " of the *brethren of Bohemia*. Theſe did openly declare " themſelves, and were headed by a ſhoemaker called Ke- " leſiſki, who drew up a confeſſion of faith for them, and " their paſtor was Matthias Convaldus. They rebaptized " all who entered into their ſect, and explained themſelves " obſcurely upon the real preſence, and refuſed to adore " Jeſus Chriſt in the euchariſt, and were mortal enemies " to the clergy and the church of Rome; ſo that after- " wards they eaſily united with the Lutherans and Cal- " viniſts."

He ſpeaks of them again in the ſixteenth century, thus: " The ſect of the Huſſites remained in Bohemia, and the " Vaudois (*i. e.* Waldenſes) had ſettled themſelves for near " two hundred years in the valleys of Savoy, Provence, and " Piemont. The former united with the Lutherans, and " the latter with the Zuinglians. There were in Bohemia, " three ſocieties of Chriſtians. The firſt was compoſed of " Catholics, ſubject to the Pope, who followed entirely " the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome. " The ſecond were thoſe whom they called *Calixtines*, who

" adminiſtered the euchariſt in both kinds, and recited " the epiſtles and goſpels at maſs in the vulgar tongue, " without changing any thing in the other doctrines and " ceremonies of the church. The third were thoſe who " called themſelves *the brethren of Bohemia*, who alſo " went by the name of *Vaudois*, and probably had their " riſe from the Taborites: for although Pogebrack and " Rokſana utterly ruined the ſect of the Taborites, yet " there remained ſeveral of them behind, who formed a " new ſect, and were headed by a ſhoemaker, called *Kele-* " *ſiſki*. Afterwards they choſe a paſtor, called *Matthias* " *Convaldus*; and, in 1467, they ſeparated themſelves from " the Calixtines, and elected new miniſters. They called " the Pope, the cardinals, and the biſhops, Antichriſts; " and the church of Rome, the whore of Babylon in the " Revelation. They rejected the ſacraments of the church. " They were governed by ſimple laics, and held the ſcrip- " ture for the only rule of their faith. Their mini- " ſters obſerved none of the ceremonies of the church in " the celebration of the maſs; and made uſe of no other " prayer but the Lord's prayer. They rebaptized thoſe " who entered into their ſect; rejected the worſhip of ſaints " and images, prayers for the dead, the law of celibacy, " vows, faſts, and ceremonies of the church. This ſect " was very numerous in Bohemia and Moravia, in the " beginning of the ſixteenth century. Being accuſed both " by the Catholics and the Calixtines before King Ladi- " ſlaus, they drew up a confeſſion of faith, which they preſent- " ed to that prince in 1504, to juſtify themſelves from the " errors laid to their charge. In this confeſſion they owned " the ſeven ſacraments, and the real preſence. King La- " diſlaus publiſhed an edict againſt them, whereby he for- " bid their aſſemblies. The brethren of Bohemia made a " ſecond remonſtrance; but Ladiſlaus declared to them, " that he would not in the leaſt relax the execution of his " edicts, and cauſed an anſwer to be made to their two " confeſſions, by a doctor called *Auguſtin*. The brethren " of Bohemia replied to that anſwer, maintaining their er- " rors plainly, and rejecting the real preſence, and tran- " ſubſtantiation. When Luther declared himſelf againſt " the church, they ſent deputies to him, with an expli- " cation of their doctrine, which Luther approved, except " the article of the euchariſt, upon which he demanded of " them a more ample explication, and that of Anabap-

" tiſm,

" tiſm *, which he condemned. In order to pleaſe him, " the brethren of Bohemia renounced Anabaptiſm, and " drew up a confeſſion of faith, in which they admitted " but two ſacraments, and agreed upon the other points " with Luther, both as to doctrine and diſcipline. In con- " ſequence of this confeſſion of faith, their union was " concluded with the Lutherans, and afterwards with the " Zuinglians, whoſe doctrine they followed about the eu- " chariſt. The Vaudois united themſelves with theſe " laſt."

We may take this for the moſt impartial account of thoſe brethren of Bohemia that we can reaſonably expect from one of the Popiſh ſect, who indeed may be a pattern of candour to Proteſtant writers, in giving an account of thoſe who ſeparate from their churches. But let us next hear the Proteſtants, to whom Dupin ſays theſe brethren were united, waving the conſideration of that important queſtion, whether that union was to the advantage, or the hurt of their proper cauſe.

Luther himſelf, in his preface to the confeſſion of the Waldenſes, 1533, teſtifies thus of them : " But among theſe " I obſerved alſo thoſe brethren whom they called *fratres* " *Pighardi*, who are not now odious to me, as they were " in the days of my Popery. In a word, I found among " them, that one great and wonderful thing, ſcarce ever " ſo much as heard of in the Pope's church, *viz.* That, lay- " ing aſide the doctrines of men, ſo far as they were able, " they meditated in the law of the Lord night and day ; " and that they were ſkilled and ready in the ſcriptures : " Whereas, in the Papacy, our maſters themſelves whol- " ly neglected the ſcriptures, with the name of which " they were puffed up ; but ſome of them had not ſo much " as ſeen the Bible at any time. But yet it could not " otherwiſe be, but that divers places muſt needs remain " obſcure to them (the brethren) ; becauſe, not only the " Greek and Hebrew tongues, but the Latin alſo were in " a manner loſt. And that continued a fault among them, " that while they endeavoured to avoid the briers and bogs " wherein the ſophiſts and monks were intangled, they " wholly abſtained from all ſtudy of the arts, being with-

* They never rejected infant-baptiſm, but only the baptiſm of the Antichriſtian church ; and ſo they baptized all whom they received, holding them as not truly baptized before.

" al

" al pinched by poverty, which they relieved by the la-
" bour of their hands."

Luther was a ſcribe and a diſputer; but he did not, with all his Latin, Hebrew, and Greek, or his philoſophy, outſtrip the brethren of Bohemia in the true knowledge of the ſcriptures, if he came their length. And it ſeems he was not very well pleaſed with their poverty, to which their ſuperior knowledge of the goſpel had reconciled them *.

Philip Melancthon, in an epiſtle of his to Mr Benedict, and the reſt of the Waldenſian brethren in Bohemia, 1533, ſays, " ——Indeed, I do not diſlike that ſeverer way
" of exerciſe or diſcipline uſed in your churches; I would
" to God it were a little more ſeverely obſerved alſo in our
" churches." From this it would appear, that thoſe brethren were not ſo cloſely united with the Lutherans, in their diſcipline, as Dupin imagines. And, pray, what hindered them to be as ſevere in their diſcipline as thoſe brethren, if they intended not more than they, to form a worldly faction inſtead of a Chriſtian church, and had no other rule of diſcipline but the ſcripture, the only rule of the brethren?

David Chytræus ſpeaks of them, as an eye-witneſs, in his oration made in the year 1569, concerning the ſtate of the churches in his time. He ſays, " In Bohemia, through
" which I travelled twice in this journey, the churches
" are ordinarily diſtinguiſhed by two deſignations: for
" ſome retaining every thing Popiſh, without any exception, are deſigned *ſub una*; others, having followed the
" doctrine of John Huſs, and, in the time of the ſynod of
" Baſil, joined again with the Papiſts, and, with the Pope's
" permiſſion, diſtributing the cup alſo to the people in the
" holy ſupper, but being conform to the Papiſts in doctrine,
" and almoſt all other rites, are called *ſub utraque*. Se-
" parated from both, and excommunicated as offſcourings
" and filth, were of old the brethren whom they com-
" monly call the *Waldenſes*, *Picardi*, and *Boleſlavienſes*,
" who profeſs themſelves to be the true, and conſtant, and
" genuine diſciples of John Huſs, and faithful keepers of
" the doctrine received from him. But a printed confeſ-
" ſion of the faith, and an apology for the doctrine of the

* *Quod plerique pauperes dicimur, non eſt infamia noſtra, ſed gloria.—Magis pauper ille eſt, qui, cum multa habeat, plura deſiderat.* Minut. Felix.

" brethren,

" brethren, are extant; and I and my colleague had a con-
" ference with two elders of their church at Vienna, con-
" cerning all the parts of the Christian religion in or-
" der; and, both from their published writings, and from
" what they spake, we found, that, concerning almost
" every article, they piously embrace and confess the same
" persuasion, according to the foundation of the pro-
" phets and apostles, which our churches also profess, in
" one voice and one spirit with the catholic church of
" Christ; and that they abhor the most part of fana-
" tical opinions, contrary to the rules of God's word, and
" condemned by the judgment of the true church. For
" whereas those called *sub utraque* and others object to
" them the error of the Donatists, *That they confine the*
" *church to their congregations*, and teach that the mini-
" stry of those ministers is null, who are vitious in their
" lives, they peremptorily deny it. Yet they are of opi-
" nion, that such ought to be removed from the office and
" excommunicated. They forbid marriage to none; but
" they would have such as are chaste in an unmarried state
" to be ministers, that they may the more conveniently
" and readily serve the church, and *that the hearers, who*
" *sustain the elders with their alms, may be the less bur-*
" *dened*. They explain their opinion concerning the eu-
" charist agreeably enough, in the apology presented to
" George Marquis of Brandenburg; and likewise, in their
" published writings and songs, they openly profess, that
" the bread and wine of the Lord's supper is the true body
" and blood of Christ; yet they think that the dispute
" about the general omnipresence ought to have no place
" here. They omit the rebaptizing sometime practised, and
" the communion of infants, yet every where practised in
" Bohemia by those of the *sub utraque* party. They ma-
" nage discipline with the greatest honesty and severity.
" In their worship they use no other tongue, but that which
" is known to the people; and though they have some
" men, skilled in the languages and learned, set over
" their congregations in our time, yet a little before,
" that they might appear as far as could be from the con-
" tagions of the sophists and monks, they did not so
" much as study the languages and liberal arts. And in
" many places, even at this day, *ministers, wholly igno-*
" *rant of the Latin tongue, but of a very honest life, and most*
" *diligently exercised in the scriptures, are presiding in their*
" *churches.*

" *churches*. They have wholly exploded the Popiſh rites, " either in themſelves impious, or elſe uſeleſs to the edifica- " tion of true piety and diſcipline; and they have reduced " the whole order of the *ſermons, readings, prayers, ſongs,* " (which they lately dedicated to the Emperor, compoſed " in moſt holy ſentiments, choice words, and elegant num- " bers), and all other ceremonies, *to the ſimplicity and gra-* " *vity of the firſt and apoſtolic church.* I ſaw a church of " theirs at Trebiza in Moravia, moſt beautifully adorned, " even by this, that *it had nothing of borrowed ornament.*"

And after he has given ſome account of the Waldenſes, he ſays again of the brethren of Bohemia, " They wholly " ſeparated themſelves from the Papiſts, and the hearers of " Rokſana joined to them, and having choſen miniſters " of the church out of their own company, they ſet up " congregations of their own, which, in midſt of various " perſecutions and manifold afflictions, are preſerved to " this day in Moravia, Bohemia, Poland, and other pla- " ces, and are reproached every where by their adverſa- " ries, with the name of *Waldenſes* and *Picardi.*"

We may take an account of a remarkable difference that happened betwixt them and the Waldenſes in the year 1467, from a hiſtory of the Waldenſes, intitled, *Luther's forerunners*, written by John Paul Perrin of Lyons. " The " brethren of Bohemia viſited, by letters, the Waldenſes of " Auſtria, giving them to underſtand, that they had recei- " ved great comfort by their laſt communication they had " with them; but yet, as they deſired not to be flattered " in any defect or fault whatſoever, ſo they could not diſ- " ſemble, without ſome defect of charity, what they had " found in them worthy reprehenſion; and that was, that " they yielded too much to their infirmities; ſince that, ha- " ving once known the truth, they nevertheleſs frequent- " ed Papiſtical churches, being preſent at thoſe idolatries " which they condemned, baſely profaning and pollu- " ting themſelves. That we are not only certainly to be- " lieve with the heart, but we muſt likewiſe make con- " feſſion with our mouth to ſalvation. Moreover, they " told them of another fault which they had taken notice " of; and that was, that they were too careful in heap- " ing up gold and ſilver: for though the end were good, " that is, to help and comfort them in perſecution, yet " for as much as every day brought with it affliction e- " nough, and that ſuch cares are not befitting thoſe that

" are

" are to look only before them, and to lay up treasure in " heaven, they condemned that which was superabundant " in them, and which in the end they would principally " rely upon."

Moreover, we do not hear that ever the brethren of Bohemia thought of defending their religion by the sword, though they were numerous, before Luther, as did the Waldenses.

SECT. IX.

SAY now, if the two witnesses were not again alive here, after they had been overcome and killed by the beast, and after the contention, by war and bloodshed, about their testimony, had issued in the reconciliation of the contending parties, upon the making of the testimony utterly of none effect, and the extermination of the party that would not yield it?

And when these witnesses appeared again alive, after this death, we see them testifying powerfully, without philosophy or human learning, without tradition, and without any dependence on the authority of the church, (as it is called), or connection with synods and councils; which had not been the case before, for about one thousand two hundred and sixty years, even from the time when they first appeared in sackcloth.

And now the scripture, the only rule for measuring the house of God, might be applied to the outward profession of Christianity, by the people who have been described, so as it could not, for what we hear, be at any time applied to the open profession of any people called Christian, for more than forty-two months, *i. e.* one thousand two hundred and sixty years before.

After this, the testimony of the witnesses was never again, as it had been, under the power of the beast. For through the fall of the tenth part of the city, and by means of the art of printing, which was invented about that time, the scriptures came to be translated and published among the nations in their languages; and it was not in the power of the beast to hinder it: for in this *the earth* at length *helped the woman*; and so the little book was opened, and *the angel flying through the midst of heaven, preached the everlasting gospel to them that dwell on the earth*, Rev. xiv. 6.

6. This made way for the ruin of the Antichriſtian ſtate, which began by the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the firſt vial in the ſixteenth century, when that great breach of the uniformity of the Antichriſtian world happened, whereby the divided nations, that worſhip the clergy, have been pained ever ſince; deſiring earneſtly, but in vain, to be healed again, by a right uniformity, *i. e.* the uniformity that each of them thinks right. But the plague on the throne and kingdom of the beaſt with the ten horns comes not till the fifth vial, which muſt be one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years after the riſe of the ten kings, and the healing of the deadly wound of the beaſt that had ſeven heads.

A Sermon preached in the Congregational Church of Dundee, January 9. 1740, the Day appointed by his Majesty for a National Fast.

[First published in the year 1740.]

1 Tim. ii. 1. 2. 3. 4.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

THIS passage comes as an inference from what Paul had been, a little before, saying of himself as a prime instance of the Lord's grace to the greatest of sinners, and a pattern of his long-suffering to them who should thereafter believe on him to life everlasting. As if he said, Let the Lord's mercy and grace to me, the chief of sinners, in consequence of his great long-suffering, encourage you to pray with all prayer and supplication for all sorts of men, giving thanks for that long-suffering that made way for the manifestation of his mercy and saving grace in me, the pattern of all long-suffering to them who shall believe through that same grace.

And whereas Christians, at that time, were ready to look on kings, and all in eminent place, as set farther out of the reach of the saving truth, and placed at a greater distance from salvation than other sorts of men whom they saw converted to the faith; the apostle recommends them in a particular manner to the fervent and instant prayers of the Christian church. And he tells them this must be very agreeable to God their common saviour, who will have, not only men of every nation, without difference, but also of every rank, the highest as well as the lowest, to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the saving truth, which

he hath ordered to be preached to all, without excluding any ſort or rank of men. The children of God ſhould imitate the benevolence of their Father, and follow the revelation of his grace in their prayers. And ſeeing his ſecret purpoſe with reſpect to any particular man, cannot appear to them to direct their prayers, they may ſee, from the inſtance of Paul, that they who ſtand at the greateſt diſtance may be the neareſt, and they who abuſe the Lord's long-ſuffering in the higheſt degree, and to the greateſt length, may yet prove in the iſſue the moſt eminent inſtances of his ſaving grace. In the view of this long-ſuffering and grace, we ought to continue inſtant in prayer for all men, and eſpecially for kings, and all in eminency; and this is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour, as it is an imitation of his grace revealed in the goſpel, and manifeſted toward ourſelves, and a very proper fruit of that grace in us.

But what I chiefly notice on this occaſion, is, the end the apoſtle here propoſes to Chriſtians, as he points out kings, and all in eminent place, to them, to be particularly prayed for, with thankſgiving. He ſays, *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty.*

That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life. The import of this may be taken up in the three following heads.

1. Their office is the ordinance of the gracious long-ſuffering God, whoſe miniſters they are, for maintaining peace and quiet in this ſinful world, till all the ends of his long-ſuffering be reached. And it is one of his great judgments upon mankind, and a prognoſtic of wrath to come, when this his ordinance is rendered ineffectual, by nation riſing againſt nation, or by the tumults of the people.

Government and magiſtracy is the valuable pledge of the divine goodneſs and forbearance to this wicked world, that, without it, would be *filled with violence*, as before the flood; in conſequence of which, the Lord gave this ordinance to Noah, among other things that ſerved to make man's life more comfortable than before, *Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed.* This is pointed to, and explained by the apoſtle, Rom. xiii. where he calls the power that is, and the ruler, the ordinance of God, and the miniſter of God to us for good, who bears the ſword as a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil to his neighbour; and he declares tribute to be due to theſe powers and rulers, as the miniſters of God. The peaceable

life

life that men enjoy at any time under the powers that be, which God hath ordained, is the effect of the divine goodneſs, upholding the power, and bleſſing it to the end for which he ordained it. But ſuppoſing the entrance of ſin, and the corruption and wickedneſs of human nature, which made this ordinance neceſſary; it is not to be expected that it can be uncorruptly adminiſtered, or that perfect quiet can be obtained among ſinners, by that which was only ordained in forbearance to them, as a reſtraint upon their wickedneſs, and an alleviation of the miſeries of their ſinful mortal life. Yet ſuppoſing the government of a nation adminiſtered in the worſt manner, it muſt ſtill be better than none; and the divine long-ſuffering appears more in any government, than it can do in anarchy, which muſt fill the earth with violence. And when God with-holds his help from the power that he hath ordained in any nation, and ſo lays it open to the calamities of war, and of the tumults of the people, this is his ſcourge to that nation, and it obliges them to think of his juſt diſpleaſure againſt them.

But here it may be aſked, Seeing Chriſtians cannot gain or loſe as to their peculiar intereſt, by the wars or tumults of this world, and their Lord has bid them not be troubled at wars, or rumours of wars, what concern have the prayers of Chriſtians in this quietneſs and peaceableneſs of life; or, what connection has this with the main ſcope of the apoſtle in this paſſage, touching prayer for the ſalvation of all men, and of rulers?

Anſ. The Lord, who forbids his diſciples to be troubled or terrified at the wars, bids them pray that they might be as little diſturbed as poſſible in that time of diſtreſs that was certainly coming on the Jewiſh nation, where they lived; and he tells them, that thoſe days of great tribulation ſhould be ſhortened for the elects ſakes. And the concern that Chriſtians have in this common peace and quiet, for which the powers that be are ordained, is, that, by means of the divine long-ſuffering therein expreſſed, grace may be manifeſted in bringing the elect of all ſorts of men to the knowledge of the ſaving truth; ſo that they ought to pray for it becauſe of the connection of this long-ſuffering with the elects ſalvation. For as, not long-ſuffering, but righteous judgment, appears in ſcourging the nations by war, ſweeping thouſands ſuddenly off the ſtage of life, ſo the time of peace and quietneſs is a time more fitted for mens attending to the ſaving truth, and coming to the knowledge

knowledge of it, than the time of confusion and the noise of war. And therefore, when the saving truth was first published to the nations, the Lord made way for the publication of it, by ordering a profound peace among them, though sin and wickedness was at a great height every where; that so the gospel of his grace might be attended to, as it cannot ordinarily be in the disorder, and in the spirit and temper of mens minds that is proper to war. And ever since, times of peace have been the times of the greatest success of the gospel: yea, the enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, appears more distinctly in the time of peace, than ever it did in any of the wars of Christendom. And Christians have the best opportunity in peace, to hold forth the word of life to the world, in their godly and honest lives, and to make their light so shine before men, that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

2. If we be heartily praying for kings, and all in eminent place, with thanksgiving for the divine long-suffering toward them, then we ourselves will be far from an unquiet disposition toward them, or from having any hand in making confusion, and giving disturbance to their government. The temper and disposition of mind that is proper to these prayers that the apostle here injoins to be made for all men, and for kings, and all in eminency, must be a principle of quiet and peaceable life toward those for whom we thus pray with thanksgiving, and can by no means lodge in a heart where disaffection toward them prevails. And therefore how great an inconsistency is it, to pretend to pray in public for the king, and all in eminent place, as the gospel requires, and yet take pains, in private conversation, to stir up the people, and make their minds evil affected toward them? How could this be vindicated from *speaking lies in hypocrisy, having the conscience seared?* And what sort of obedience to this command of the gospel would it then be, to insinuate disaffection to the powers that be, and move sedition against their government, by the very manner of praying for them? If we can be perswaded that this is reconcileable to the spirit of the gospel, or to the strain of the Christian law with respect to the powers that be, we may next believe that we would be far better ruled by the men of this unquiet spirit and temper, if they were set in authority over us. But the Christian spirit will lead us, as it did the first Christians, to trust God with our prayers

prayers for the powers that be, and not meddle with those that are given to change.

3. If our prayers should be answered in their coming to the knowledge of the saving truth, the effect must be, that they will not employ their power to persecute the church, or the believers of that truth; and so we Christians shall have the benefit of God's ordinance of magistracy, in being protected from open and public violence, and suffered to live in peace and quiet. I say, from public violence, because Christians cannot expect to be free at any time from the more private effects of the world's hatred, the enmity of their nearest friends, and the reproaches of their neighbours, and the like.

This is all the benefit the apostle would have Christians to expect from Christians in power, *That we may lead quiet and peaceable lives*; even as when the public persecution, wherein he himself was a ringleader, ceased by his conversion, *then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria.* He does not propose that we should be a prevailing faction of this world, or directors of the government, capable to make the lives of other men uneasy (toward whom the Lord is shewing long-suffering, as he did to ourselves before we came to the knowledge of the truth), and employing the magistrate to disquiet the lives of them who deny and hate the truth; but that we ourselves should lead quiet and peaceable lives. Nor does he propose, that we, by means of the conversion of them in power, should arise to more worldly honour and wealth, and more fleshly pleasure, and so fulfil the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, (which has been done to as great perfection in the world called Christian, as ever it was done in any other world); but that we should lead quiet and peaceable lives *in all godliness and honesty.* Even as the churches throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, when they had rest, *were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.* They led quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, and so propagated the gospel, and promoted the salvation of men by their lives, and so had the answer of their prayers for the salvation of men by the truth.

Before I speak more particularly of this godliness and honesty, I must take notice, that we in this kingdom have long enjoyed good opportunity for the profession and practice

tice of all godlineſs and honeſty, through the religious liberty, or liberty of conſcience, that takes place under the preſent adminiſtration, as much, if not more, in this kingdom, as any where elſe on the globe. And what part of godlineſs or honeſty, pointed at in the Chriſtian law, have we not liberty to profeſs and practiſe? For though the world that goes under the Chriſtian name here, hates the power of godlineſs, and denies it as well as elſewhere; yet ſuch is our preſent conſtitution, and the ſpirit of our government, and the general ſenſe of the benefit of liberty of conſcience under this adminiſtration, that men of all ſorts have the beſt outward opportunity for coming to the knowledge of the ſaving truth, and there is nothing to hinder us from obeying it, but worldly mens hatred, that will be inſeparable from it, while the world ſtands, and our own worldly luſts. And this religious liberty muſt be very agreeable to them who are well affected to the divine long-ſuffering that is connected with ſalvation to all ſorts of men, and who pray heartily for all men, as the apoſtle commands.

And now, ſeeing this kingdom is engaged in a war with a nation where the very government is animated by the ſpirit of perſecution, and of deſtroying mens lives with cruelty for Chriſt's ſake, and where tyranny over the conſciences of men is exerciſed to the greateſt perfection; and ſeeing the experience of all ages abundantly declares, that *the battle is not to the ſtrong*, and it has been the way of Providence, in the iſſues of war, to humble proud boaſters; for *the battle is the Lord's*, and *a horſe is prepared againſt the day of battle, but ſafety is of the Lord:* it is therefore time for us now to inquire what uſe we have made of the religious liberty we enjoy, and ſee if we have not provoked God, by our abuſe of it, to ſhew his juſt diſpleaſure *againſt* us, by depriving us of the precious opportunity we have enjoyed, for leading quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs and honeſty.

If we obſerve how this valuable privilege is uſed by the nation, we ſhall ſee it miſimproved, and greatly abuſed, eſpecially by two ſorts of men

1. Some of the moſt zealous of the ſtricteſt ſect of the national religion, while they take the common benefit of the preſent liberty, are making this uſe of it, to fill the minds of the people that hearken to them with prejudice againſt it, and diſaffect them to the government, by means of ſolemn faſts and prayers againſt toleration, as a great evil,

evil, and cauſe of God's wrath againſt the land where it takes place. They faſt, becauſe their own form of religion does not prevail in the nation, to the extirpation of every other form. They faſt, becauſe they have it not in their power to knock every one on the head, who finds himſelf obliged, in conſcience, openly and obſtinately to diſſent from them. They faſt, becauſe every man has the ſame freedom with them to judge for himſelf, how he ought to worſhip God, and to practiſe accordingly; and becauſe a ſolemn conſpiracy, in the laſt age, againſt this freedom, and for uniformity and extirpation, has been defeated. And they pray moſt earneſtly, that it may be again revived; that ſo they, being again poſſeſſed of a religious dominion over the nation, may be able to make every man's life uneaſy that refuſes ſubjection to them, and will not pay them homage. And thus theſe men requite the Lord, thus they give him thanks for his goodneſs, and the long-ſuffering he is ſhewing towards all ſorts of men, and the opportunity he is giving them to come to the knowledge of the truth, in the time and place of the world where they live! Were it not moſt juſt, that ſuch men ſhould be made to know the benefit of toleration by the want of it? Would it not be a righteous thing with God to bring them under the uniformity and extirpation of the kingdom that is at war with us? But when we conſider the Lord's long-ſuffering towards Paul, the perſecuting Phariſee, and his grace manifeſted to him in conſequence of that, we ſhould be moved to pray for the continuance of the divine long-ſuffering toward them, that ſo they, as well as other ſorts of men, may come to repentance, and the acknowledgment of the truth, which they are now ready to perſecute as error and deluſion.

2. The religious liberty that takes place in this nation, is groſsly abuſed by another ſort of men, who have taken occaſion, from it, to blaſpheme the ſaving truth, the truth of the teſtimony of God in the goſpel, the perſon and righteouſneſs of the great God, even the Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and the grace that ſaves us, in its glorious ſovereignty, freedom, and power. And theſe blaſphemies are daily publiſhed, and gaining ground, and prevailing every where; ſo that we ſee every day before our eyes, the fulfilment of Peter's prophecy concerning the *ſcoffers in the laſt days*. Every one that knows and loves the truth, muſt own that it would be a moſt righteous judgment from the

Lord, upon these men, to deprive them of the liberty that they so horribly abuse, and bring them under the tortures of the inquisition. But, as many of this sort give sufficient evidence, that they will comply with any form of religion, and subscribe to it, rather than suffer, and persecution cannot touch them so easily as the believers of the truth; so when we consider our Lord's patience toward the Sadducees, and think of his long-suffering toward Paul, while a blasphemer of the truth and the name of Jesus, we should be excited to pray likewise for this sort of men, with thanksgiving for the divine long-suffering toward them, and desire the continuance of it, if so, peradventure, God may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

But it concerns us, especially on this occasion, to inquire how we ourselves have improved the precious opportunity we have now, of a long time, enjoyed, for proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, and for obeying it. And cannot our consciences tell us, that we have not used the time of rest, as did the first Christians, *walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost?* Is not this aggravated by our pretence of following them, in opposition to the course of this present evil world? For, while, through the riches of the divine goodness and forbearance, we have had access to observe the footsteps of the followers of the Lord Jesus, pointed out to us in the New Testament, and have been pretending to go forth, by these footsteps, from all the ways of apostasy that are followed in the world called Christian, we are yet, after all, in the course of our lives, more conformed to this world, by our unmortified self-love and worldly lusts, than we are to the first churches of God, which were in Christ Jesus in their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope. Alas! we are far from being so like them in these glorious things, as we are in those things that we see condemned in them, to be carefully avoided by us. And where is that zeal for the salvation of all men that our text requires? How little do we promote their salvation, by holding forth the word of life to them in the practice of all godliness and honesty; yea, how far do we come short of the primitive fervency in prayer, either for our own salvation, or the salvation of others?

It becomes us, therefore, to acknowledge our iniquity, to

to lament and ablior our lukewarmneſs, and want of the zeal of good works, and to ſay the Lord is righteous, if he deprive us of the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, which we have been, as well as others, deſpiſing. Let us come to the propitiation, the throne of grace, ſprinkled with the blood that ſpeaks better things than that of Abel, with the prayer of the publican, calling on the name of the Lord Jeſus, the Prince exalted to give repentance and the remiſſion of ſins.

And, if we be thus in earneſt about our own ſalvation, we will likewiſe be concerned for that long-ſuffering toward the nation, that is connected with the ſalvation of all ſorts of men. Let us pray earneſtly for the lengthening out of the tranquillity of this kingdom, and that our King's arms may be ſtrengthened for this end. Yea, who knows but the Lord may be intreated to open a door for ſuch liberty as we enjoy, even in that kingdom that is at war with us? for he may yet have a people there, whom he will have to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, if we do indeed repent on this occaſion, our repentance will appear in the godlineſs and honeſty of our lives, which is the effect of the grace that gives us repentance and remiſſion of ſins. And for our direction,

Godlineſs may be deſcribed by delighting in God. And as drunkards, whoremongers, and men of honour, are denominated from the things they delight in, ſo as the courſe of their lives tends toward them; even ſo the godly man is named from that delight in God, which draws the courſe of his life toward him. The godly man loves God, as the covetous man loves money, and delights in gain. He delights in beholding the glory of the juſt God the Saviour, as other men do in beholding their own worth and excellency; and therefore he cleaves, with his greateſt care, to the means of knowing and enjoying his greateſt delight, his chief good, Pſal. xxvii. 4. while others are perhaps diligently uſing the ſame means, but for other purpoſes.

If we inquire how this godlineſs muſt ſhew itſelf in life; the only rule of godlineſs for ſinful men, now, is the word of God in the ſcriptures of his prophets and apoſtles, and there can be no ſtandard for it but that; ſo that whatever is beyond that, has nothing to do with godlineſs.

All the godlineſs pointed out in the ſcriptures, is to be regarded by them who would live godly, without neg-

lecting or despising the least thing that pertains to it. But the great proof of godliness in the New-Testament (which is the spirit of the Old), is the keeping of Christ's new commandment of brotherly love, in all its branches, as we see from our Lord's last sermon to his disciples, and from the whole first epistle of John.

And honesty may be viewed in the exhortations that Peter gives Christians, 1 Pet. ii. from ver. 11. to the end, and chap. iii. If we would lead our life in honesty, we must be true and faithful in our words, and our lips speak no guile; we must be just in all our dealings, giving to all their dues, and we must be followers of that which is good, full of mercy and good fruits. He that leads not a life of good works and almsdeeds, is so far from leading an honest life, in the scripture-account, that he is declared an unfaithful steward of the unrighteous Mammon.

We may see what reckoning God makes of fasting without alms, Is. lviii. And now is the time for all men to hearken to that advice, Dan. iv. 27. *Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.*

A Sermon preached in the Congregational Church in Dundee, February 4. 1741, the Day appointed by his Majesty for a National Fast.

With a Note on the History of Mordecai and Haman, in the Book of Esther.

[First published in the year 1741.]

1 Tim. ii. 1. 2. 3. 4.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

These words may not only be an inference from the apostle's account of himself, (as was noticed before on an occasion of this nature), but likewise from what he had immediately said of his delivering Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme. There was a peculiar aggravation in their case, whom he had been obliged to declare the subjects of Satan the prince of this world, debarring them from the privileges of Christ's subjects, because, having put away a good conscience, they had made shipwreck of the faith they once professed, and had become some way reproachers of the saving truth, the word of God's grace. And yet so extensive was the view of the Lord's long-suffering and saving grace, which he had by his own conversion, that he hopes the sentence passed on them may be a mean of reclaiming them: for this was the end of it, that they might learn not to blaspheme. And in this broad view of the grace of the gospel, he exhorts and encourages Christians to pray for all men, and particularly

particularly for them who they might think lay fartheſt out of the way of being ſaved.

This is one remarkable way wherein the benevolence of the goſpel ſhews itſelf in imitation of God's ſaving grace, to pray heartily and earneſtly for men of all ſorts; and, as the Lord Jeſus expreſsly commanded bleſſing and praying for our enemies and perſecutors, Chriſtians had at that time an opportunity for obedience to this command, with reſpect to rulers who were then adverſe to them. Paul had once ſome kind of authority, and exerciſed it to the utmoſt againſt the church; and his converſion may be looked on as the anſwer of Stephen's prayer which he made, in obedience to the Lord's command, at his death. And how proper was it then for Paul, to preſs this duty upon Chriſtians, toward all in authority, however oppoſite to them?

My deſign is to bear home upon myſelf and you a ſenſe of the obligation of this command that is ſo warmly preſſed upon Chriſtians by the apoſtle in this text.

But it muſt firſt be obſerved, That, as the whole obedience of the goſpel, where-ever it takes place, is owing to the ſupernatural grace of the goſpel, ſo is it in this particular inſtance, as we may eaſily ſee, by looking into ourſelves, or obſerving the general practice of the world called Chriſtian, with reſpect to this command of the goſpel. We know how far our hearts are from the benevolent temper that is neceſſary to this duty toward all in authority, if they appear againſt us in the uſe of their power; and we need not be urged to bleſs and pray for them with thanſgiving, when we ſee their power ſerving our intereſt: we do it naturally. When our intereſts are connected with them who are in authority, we wiſh the government well; but when we ſtand connected with the diſcontented, out of power, and puſhing to be in, we are, from the ſame principle, as ready to wiſh ill to our rulers, and more diſpoſed to curſe than to bleſs them. In this we have had an example ſet to us by the clergy, the greateſt flatterers of rulers that ſerve them with their power to cruſh their adverſaries, and to maintain their pretended ſpiritual, but really carnal rights and privileges; for ſuch rulers, they can pray heartily, and zealouſly preach up ſubjection to them; but when princes have ſhewed them neglect, or wanted any way to reduce them, or bring them a little under, they have as zealouſly prayed and propheſied againſt them, as wicked men, and enemies to the church, ſanctified evil-ſpeaking of them,

and

and turned rebellion into a point of religion. And if they have been put in mind of the commands of Jesus Christ in this case, they never wanted distinctions, to evade the force of any thing that could be said to convince them. Thus the corruption of our hearts has made this commandment of Christ of none effect to the bulk of us that go under the Christian name, and the still, small voice of the gospel is drowned amidst the noise and cry of parties eagerly pursuing their worldly interests; so that it can scarce be heard even by them to whom it shews a better interest to be pursued. But Christ's sheep must hear his voice, and follow him. And, for their sakes, something must be said, to set aside the perversion of his gospel, and make way for a conscientious and hearty obedience to this his commandment.

And to this purpose, as I have often observed to you, that the gospel distinguishes itself by a peculiar simplicity, and that the corruption of Christianity is but a departure from this, so now I would have it laid down as a principle, That the commands of the gospel are plain and simple, and, as to the obedience of them, do not depend on doubtful disputations. For, whereas *not many wise men after the flesh are called,* the generality of true Christians are not capable to judge of nice questions; and the gospel speaks to us as learning from it, that same *simplicity and godly sincerity* wherewith it was at first preached by the apostles. Therefore we see, it does not make a cow-herd a philosopher, or fit to rule a state, when it saves him by the knowledge of the truth; and it humbles the wise men of this world, as to their pride of knowledge, declaring their wisdom foolishness, while it makes them wise to salvation. The gospel was never intended to solve the questions, and satisfy the rational inquiries of the philosophers, of whom it says, that *professing themselves wise, they became fools:* for they lost the truth in a maze of speculations and questions about what the conscience of every man knows in the most simple manner. Nor was it ever intended to satisfy the politician about the preferable form of civil government, or to enable him to decide his questions about the right and title by which kings should hold their kingdoms, and about their prerogatives, and the rights of the people, and concerning the constitution of a kingdom or commonwealth. But as nature teaches us in the simplest manner,

so

ſo likewiſe does the goſpel teach us its ſuperadded light and law.

Of this we have a remarkable inſtance in the caſe now before us: for when we are bidden pray for kings, and all in authority, we have no other queſtion left us to aſk, but this plain one, Who is in authority? For, if we ſhould inquire further, whether they be in authority according to right? we ſhall not find a ſolution for that queſtion in the goſpel. And therefore it commands us to be ſubject to the *powers that be*, to pray for them, and to pay them tribute; ſeeing, if it had left any room for a doubt about a right or wrong form of civil government, or about rightful and lawful or unlawful kings and rulers, that might make us halt as to our obedience, it would certainly have given us ſome direction as to this matter of doubt, and told us ſomething that might ſatisfy every Chriſtian; for every Chriſtian is bound to obey what it commands with reſpect to kings and all in authority. And if it hath not done this, Chriſtians are left free from any ſcruple on this head, free to obey what the Lord has commanded them, with reſpect to any form of government they happen to live under, or with reſpect to any king whom they ſee God (who pulls down and ſets up kings as he pleaſes) has in his providence ſet over them. How then can Chriſtians make conſcience of not praying for a king, becauſe they are not ſatisfied of the juſtneſs of his title to the crown, though they acknowledge him king, by uſing his protection and paying him tribute? Is ſuch a conſcience under the direction or influence of the goſpel? If it be, then certainly the goſpel has laid ſome foundation for a ſcruple about the rights and titles of kings to their crowns. But we ſhall find no inſinuation there, of any ſuch diſtinction, as *a king in fact, and a king by right*: it belonged not to the apoſtles, but to them who have corrupted the minds of Chriſtians from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt, to deal in ſuch diſtinctions.

Nor has the goſpel given Chriſtians any occaſion to heſitate, as to what it requires of them toward the powers that be, by putting them upon judging of the meaſures of government, and whether thoſe in power govern according to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and honeſtly ſeek the true intereſt and good of the nation. For, beſides a general view of the end of their office, and the purpoſe for which God ordained it, laid as a foundation for our ſubjection to them, we have no direction in the goſpel about this either. Now, that

that end and purpose must be reached under any government, as much as it was by those rulers to whom the apostle at first required subjection on this account. Even under any of the then emperors (suppose Nero), it was better for the world, that there was government in it, than if there had been none at all: it was by means of this same government, that Paul was not murdered by the Jewish mob, nor scourged by the chief captain at Jerusalem; and it was owing to this, that he was rescued out of the hands of his enemies the Jews, by his appeal to Cæsar, and that he had liberty to preach the gospel for two whole years, in his own hired house, no man forbidding him.

Shall we then say, that Paul (Rom. xiii. 1.—7.) suspends our subjection, and paying of tribute to the powers that be, upon our being satisfied in our consciences, that the power is exercised in a good and upright manner?

If this be the case, it must be owned, that Paul's exhortation was of little use to those Christians to whom it was at first directed: for how could the Christians at Rome, in this case, be satisfied in their consciences, that subjection and tribute was due to the rulers there at that time?

And we must next say, that Paul first supposes the world so wicked, that it needs the restraint of government, and then alledges, that this government cannot be exercised by wicked men, as he believed all men to be without the saving grace of God. And yet our text, that bids pray for kings, and all in authority, is far enough from supposing them to be already partakers of that grace; and he never tells us, that the grace of the gospel is given to qualify men for ruling a kingdom of this present world.

And then we must certainly take him to be subjecting the measures of government to the judgment of *every* Christian *soul*, and leaving it to them to be subject or not as every one of their consciences is satisfied that the government is administered for their good. That is, he is subjecting the powers that be to every soul of them, and not every soul of them to those powers.

But what shall we then think of the subjection of the first Christians to persecuting rulers, not only in the time of the apostles, (who, though they were the chief sufferers, pressed this subjection upon them), but for 200 years after? Though the writers in that time signify, that it was not out of their power to repel force by force, as being very numerous in all places, except the temples, and as being the

greateſt contemners of death, yet they had then ſuch a view of the nature of their religion, that they thought it obliged them rather to ſuffer themſelves to be killed than to kill others. They could ſay, they were enemies to no man, and leaſt of all to the Emperor, for whom they prayed heartily, very well knowing that it was their God who had eſtabliſhed him. This they ſaid, according to Rom. xiii. And from this it is manifeſt, they took it ſo, as to find themſelves obliged, by it, to be ſubject for conſcience ſake, even to the emperors that perſecuted them. And though they had more reaſon to complain of injuſtice, than any ſort of men in the empire, and there were manifold plots, inſurrections, and tumults in their time; yet none of them could be charged with having any part in theſe; and upon this they could appeal to their adverſaries. Here was the ſupernatural grace of the goſpel, clearly manifeſted in the obedience of the goſpel; a notable proof of the truth of Chriſtianity: for thus it was *the will of God, that with well-doing Chriſtians might put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, as free, and not having liberty as a cloak of maliciouſneſs, but as the ſervants of God, honouring all men, loving the brotherhood, fearing God, and honouring the king.* And here I would have this practice of the ancient Chriſtians attended to, and ſeriouſly conſidered, by thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves by their zeal for the teſtimonies of martyrs, for their form of national religion in former times: for theſe ancient Chriſtians were indeed *they* who *overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

Some ſuppoſe that they take off the force of all that was ſaid by the apoſtles, on this head, to the firſt Chriſtians, and of all that can be alledged from the agreeable practice of the primitive Chriſtians toward the powers of the earth, by telling us of the great alteration in the ſtate of things that has happened ſince that time: for, from the time of Conſtantine the Great, the profeſſion of Chriſtianity ſtands quite in another ſituation, wherein what was before unlawful, or at leaſt very unfit and improper, may be very juſt and right. There are now Chriſtian kings and Chriſtian nations; and nations may do, and certainly ought to do, what could not be proper to private men, not in a national capacity, nor having any ſuch rights to plead, as ariſe from a legal eſtabliſhment. And ſome alledge, that kings and rulers, by being Chriſtians, are under ſuch obligations, and have

have such duties laid on them in the exercise of their office toward the church, as wholly alter the case from what it was in the time of the apostles; so that what the apostles said to Christians as to the then powers, cannot answer the case of Christians now with respect to their Christian rulers.

But, unless it be said, that this new situation has quite made void all that the gospel commands with respect to rulers, we must grant, that we labour under one disadvantage as to our conduct toward the powers that be, in this our situation, that the first Christians were altogether free from in their situation: for they had express direction in the gospel; whereas we have none. We must go through a long train of perplexing questions about the constitution of the state, the rights of the rulers and of the subjects, and the titles of kings, before we can be conscientiously subject, and pay tribute for conscience sake, or before we can know whom to pray for as rightful kings, or in lawful authority, and our consciences must give their verdict upon the justness of the clamours and complaints of every discontented party against the measures of the government, in order to our praying heartily, as the gospel requires, for kings, and for all in eminency. So that, if Jesus Christ had framed his religion for being national, it looks like a great defect in his gospel, in this case, that it has not referred to the Jewish constitution and judicial law, or else given us some other form of civil government, in the place of it, for our direction, or, at least, left us more to our discretion than it does, as to subjection and tribute, and benevolent prayers for kings, and all in authority. But the gospel must not lie under such an imputation.

The Lord Jesus testified before Pilate, that his *kingdom is not of this world.* His subjects, who hear his voice, are *a people* whom *God takes out of the nations for his name; strangers and pilgrims on the earth,* having *no continuing city here, but* seeking *one to come.* He addresses them as *a little flock,* in distinction from *the nations of the world*; forbids a government among them like that of the nations; discharges them to *seek those things* which *the nations seek after*; and commands them to *seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.* He tells them, that they *shall be hated of all nations for his name,* and that *to the end;* and so calls them to follow him in that obedience which he learned from the things that he suffered, and in the exercise of those graces and virtues that have no place but under the

croſs: for, he ſays, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me.*

As it is impoſſible to reconcile all this, and more of this kind in the goſpel, to the ſtate of a nation of this world, we ſee, in fact, that whenever the profeſſion of Chriſtianity was ſhaped for a nation, and became national, the primitive practice, which was truly Chriſtian, failed, and was ſet aſide, like ſome plant that grows in dry ground, and decays when tranſplanted into a richer ſoil. We have often heard this much lamented; but the cauſe of it has not been ſufficiently conſidered: for ſtill the national ſtate of Chriſtianity is rather looked on as a great advantage. But however profitable it be to thoſe whoſe worldly intereſt lies in it, and whatever good Providence has brought out of it; one thing ſeems pretty certain, that the ancient proof of the truth of Chriſtianity, ariſing from the practice of its profeſſors, in diſtinction from the men of this world, had its end where it began: and particularly, the profeſſors of Chriſtianity cannot be diſtinguiſhed from other men, and from the nations of the world, by the primitive Chriſtian practice, with reſpect to rulers of this world. If any would revive that practice, they muſt be diſtinguiſhed by it from the bulk of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and from Chriſtian nations: for what tumult or ſedition happened in the Heathen nations, or ſpeaking evil of thoſe in authority, and having liberty as a cloak of maliciouſneſs, that cannot be paralleled in the Chriſtian nations? Theſe things muſt be, and will be to the end of the world in the nations of this world, whatever name they go under, and whatever religion be eſtabliſhed among them. And is not the conduct of the clergy with the Chriſtian powers, and the practice of the Chriſtian world in conſequence of that, an inexhauſtible fund of reproach to Chriſtianity from infidels? Though it be true, that their ſpeaking evil of the way of truth, on this account, is itſelf a confirmation of the truth of the goſpel, which foretells the occaſion of it, as a very great evil that would befal the Chriſtian profeſſion, by means of its leading men, whom it points out, at the ſame time, as *deſpiſing government, preſumptuous, ſelf-willed,* and *not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities.*

It is true, Chriſt is head over all things to his body the church; and therefore over the Grand Signior, or emperor of China, as well as over the powers called Chriſtian; and ſo was he head unto his church, over the Heathen Roman emperor,

emperor, and all in authority at that time, who were certainly bound to obey the gospel on pain of damnation, and so to do every thing that the gospel requires of any Christian magistrate: but notwithstanding their disobedience, and their acting likewise, in many gross instances, contrary to the great design of government, especially toward Christ's people; the gospel, nevertheless, obliged the consciences of their Christian subjects to give them honour, to pay them tribute, and to pray heartily for them. And shall it be said, that Christians are loosed from this obligation to magistrates, by their becoming Christians? Or, does the gospel speak of any peculiar new headship of Christ over them in that case, distinct from his headship over his whole body the church, and from the headship given him over all things unto it? Or, how shall it appear from the gospel, that Christianity makes any further alteration in the business proper to the civil magistrate, than it does in the practice of physic or navigation? For Christ and his apostles gave as little direction about the one as about the other.

No doubt Jesus Christ has all power in heaven and in earth, and power over all flesh given him, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him of all nations, without difference; and so he has ordered his gospel, the word of eternal life, to be preached to all nations without distinction. He pulls down and sets up kings, in what manner, and by what means he pleases; turns kingdoms into commonwealths, and these again into kingdoms; and makes absolute governments limited, and the limited absolute, as he sees best to answer his whole design about the people to whom he gives eternal life. His commandment to his people, with respect to government, and civil governors, supposes his subjects among all nations, and so makes no manner of distinction nor exception as to any form of civil government. Nor has he any where left the carrying on of his grand design, by disposing of kingdoms, under the direction of Christians, or their leaders. He has not given his ministers any other instrument in their hand, for serving his great design, but preaching the gospel, and teaching to observe all things whatsoever he commanded his apostles, to whom he gave no commandment about any form of civil government, nor any special direction to those in authority, concerning the administration of it. He has wholly reserved in his own hand the exercise of his power in heaven and in earth, and the disposal of the powers that

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be in the earth, in order to his giving eternal life to his own church and people. Nor did he command his apoſtles to teach Chriſtians to obſerve any thing with reſpect to magiſtrates, in any nation where they happen to live, but to be ſubject, and pay tribute for conſcience ſake, to honour them, and be afraid to ſpeak evil of them, and to pray for them, as in the words of the text.

Have we any ground then to ſay, that a magiſtrate, by becoming Chriſtian, is put under the direction of Chriſtian miniſters or people, as to how he ought to rule a nation, and that they are made judges by the goſpel, how he ſhould govern as a Chriſtian, and employ his power for the good of the church? Indeed it has been ſo thought from the time of Conſtantine. But their management of this matter, from that day to this, may open the eyes of them that will ſee, and ſhew them the vanity of ſuch a thought. Is not this the very ſource of Antichriſtian power, which the Apocalypſe makes to be the power of the kings of the earth given to the beaſt againſt the Lamb? We may take a view of this monſtrous power, by ſetting it overagainſt what Paul ſpeaks to the Romans, of the powers ordained of God, when he ſays, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher powers*. By virtue of the foreſaid notion about the Chriſtian magiſtrate, they firſt thought the Chriſtian emperor had more power about the church than the goſpel had declared to belong to the Heatheniſh ones, and then (as one ſtep out of the road makes way for another) when the empire was broke into about ten independent kingdoms, and theſe kings became Chriſtian, they ſubjected themſelves with one accord to the clergy, or *church repreſentative*, and gave them their power and ſtrength to make the Chriſtian world uniform in ſubjection to them, in whom they were united as one empire. For, becauſe it was ſuppoſed that the power and ſtrength of theſe Chriſtian kings ought to be employed for Chriſt and his church, it was thought very proper that the exerciſe of this Chriſtian power ſhould be under the direction of Chriſt's miniſters, who were now looked on as the *church repreſentative*, and as repreſenting Chriſt on the earth; and therefore theſe kings gave their kingdom, and became ſubject to this viſible head of the church, ſuppoſing that they gave their kingdom, to Chriſt the head of the church, in this his repreſentative, but it was really to Antichriſt. Here was a Chriſtian *ſoul*, or as many *ſouls* as made up this viſible head, ſet above the powers to which the apoſtle commanded

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every *ſoul* to be ſubject, and having theſe powers in ſubjection, which God ordained to be higher. And the clergy, having theſe powers thus ordained as their miniſters, employed them to execute their wrath againſt all ſuch, as evildoers, who refuſed ſubjection in any thing to Chriſt, *i. e.* to themſelves, his repreſentatives on the earth.

After the goſpel had ſo ſeverely injoined the conſcientious ſubjection of every Chriſtian ſoul to the higher powers, as God's miniſters, it is no wonder to find ſubjection to this power of the clergy diſcharged under the higheſt pains, as quite oppoſite to Chriſt, and to his kingdom, that is not of this world: for there is a beautiful conſiſtency in the goſpel; and if we be ſubject to the higher powers, as it commands, we cannot be conſcientiouſly ſubject to the very reverſe; we cannot be well affected to any pretended ſpiritual rulers, ſetting themſelves above them, and making their power and authority drudge to theirs, to make the world obey them.

The Lord has been now, of a long time, *conſuming* this Antichriſt, and is even now, according to his word, *filling the kingdom of the beaſt with darkneſs*; ſo that *they gnaw their tongues for pain*, but they *repent not of their deeds*; for if the power that is, ſeems, in any inſtance, to ſtrike at the independency of the national church, or eſtabliſhed clergy; and if that power ſhew itſelf higher than they, as to the privileges of their eſtabliſhment, we ſee how they rage and cry out of wrong, and ſome of them go the length to bode ill upon it, if not to the King, at leaſt to his miniſter, wiſhing him Haman's fate. And if the King be not diſpoſed to give them his power to make all his ſubjects abſtain from their labour in their employments, to attend upon them on any day, and for any cauſe they pleaſe to appoint, but takes it upon himſelf to call his ſubjects to faſt, and to ſet a time for it; we hear a party of them raiſing a loud cry againſt their brethren who incline not to diſpute this point with him, and condemning them in the moſt ſolemn manner, as baſe betrayers of the right and prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt to an uſurper. This is to them a notable ground of faſting and humiliation: and indeed, if the grounds of faſting peculiar to this party, be well examined, they will amount to this, that the power of the clergy has come under a great decay, ſince the days of our forefathers, when the nation ſwore allegiance to them, and that they themſelves are not the reigning clergy, and have it not in

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their power to keep Britain and Ireland to that allegiance. And, as far as the word of God, concerning the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of Chriſt, which is not of this world, is ſet in oppoſition to this worldly kingdom that they are contending for, they are ready to treat it with reproach, and ſo blaſpheme the God of heaven.

As for the nations of this world, and the men of the nations, who have their portion in this life, they have been, and will always be, finding fault with their rulers; and they are never readier to tumultuate, than in the times of greateſt fulneſs and eaſe; becauſe this provokes them to purſue more of their happineſs, which is in this life. And it is obſervable, that the philoſophers, in their doctrine, laboured this point hard, to make a kingdom or commonwealth happy and flouriſhing. They amuſed themſelves, and thoſe who hearkened to them, with the hopes of effecting it by their fine rules. And thus they humoured the general foible of fallen mankind, ſeeking happineſs in this mortal life. But how vaſtly does the goſpel differ here! It is indeed the word of life and true happineſs; but this life is life from the dead: it calls men to be crucified to this world by the croſs of Chriſt, and to look for eternal life through the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, in the way of following him, bearing their croſs: and it ſhews Chriſtians, that they are not ſo much concerned as other men, in the riſings of nations againſt nations, and need not be ſo anxious as they, about wars and rumours of wars, becauſe their life and happineſs lies not in this world, and cannot be taken from them by theſe things. And very agreeably to this (for ſtill it is a moſt conſiſtent doctrine) it forbids Chriſtians that ſpeaking evil of dignities, and hating of one another, that is common among men, and that proceeds from our finding ourſelves hampered by government and tribute in the fulfilment of our luſts, and thwarted by one another in our various croſs purſuits after the happineſs of this life, which yet we could not enjoy in any tolerable meaſure without ſociety and government. It is rare to ſee us always pleaſed, and finding no fault in any of the relations wherein we are placed in this world; and the faults of others are not hateful to us becauſe they are faults (for we ourſelves would do the ſame things), but becauſe they croſs us: and, for the ſame reaſon, the ſeaſons ſeldom ſo pleaſe the huſbandman, that he finds no fault with them; for all proceeds from the ſame ſource with murmuring

muring againſt the divine providence, and charging God fooliſhly.

Now, the end of all that has been ſaid is reached, if we are diſintangled from the vain thoughts that have ſerved to render the commands of the goſpel, with reſpect to the higher powers, of none effect, and particularly the plain command in the text, that ſo we may find the obligation of it in our conſciences, and ſee the need we have of the grace of the goſpel, to engage us in the practice of this ſame duty of praying heartily, as the texts directs, for the King and all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty. This commandment cannot be grievous to us, if we have any thing of that view of the Lord's grace, which the apoſtle gives us when he delivers it unto us. And they who are otherwiſe minded, may indeed pretend to act in the ſpirit of the philoſophers, or to imitate the Roman virtue; but they can have no pretence in the goſpel, in the example of Jeſus Chriſt, the pattern of Chriſtian virtue, or in the practice of his firſt and trueſt followers.

And if it be inquired, What is it that we lament on this occaſion, and what are the cauſes of our faſting? let this have the firſt place, That we have lived ſo much in the neglect of the duty that is ſo much preſſed upon us in this text. Is not diſobedience to Chriſt, in any of his commands, a juſt cauſe of faſting, eſpecially to them who diſtinguiſh themſelves by a profeſſion of obedience to him? For why call we him Lord, and do not the things that he ſays? And can we ſay we have been doing what he here requires, according to the ſpirit of this paſſage? Have we been in that gracious benevolent diſpoſition to all men, and eſpecially all in authority, that is neceſſary to the making of theſe ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks for them? Before we complain of our rulers, let us firſt ſee if Jeſus Chriſt has not ſomewhat againſt us as to our duty toward them. And if we cannot clear ourſelves of ſin in this matter, we can have no ſolid hope of eſcaping the divine judgment againſt this, or any other ſin, but by the ſhedding of Chriſt's blood for the remiſſion of it. And ſhall it then be a light thing to us to live any longer in it? Or will we pretend to call him *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, who became *a ſervant of rulers*, and yet not let the ſame mind be in us that was in him, nor be aſhamed of the contrary diſpoſition?

And therefore let it be matter of ſhame and ſelf-abhor-

rence to us, that we have had ever any part in the general apoſtaſy from the commandment of the Lord Jeſus, with reſpect to kings and all in authority, and from the glorious primitive Chriſtian practice, in obedience to him, which was ſo good and acceptable in the ſight of God our ſaviour. Is not the goſpel lamentably perverted, when, under the Chriſtian name, reproaching and curſing of rulers comes openly in place of bleſſing and praying for them, and when Chriſtian miniſters can confidently complain to God of thoſe whom he has ſet in authority over them, and ſpeak evil of them, and revile them to their ſubjects in the name of Chriſt?

Let me ſay, That I cannot ſee any thing that threatens more ills to the nation at preſent, than the ferment that the minds of the people have been put into againſt thoſe who are in authority: And therefore I would earneſtly exhort you, my brethren, who pray for the peace of the nation where you dwell at this time, to make interceſſions, prayers, and ſupplications to the Lord, *who rules the raging of the ſea*, and *when the waves thereof ariſe, ſtills them*, that, in the riches of his goodneſs and long-ſuffering, he may be pleaſed to avert the evils that natively ariſe out of this to the nation. And as, in every caſe about which we are ready to be careful, we ought to *make our requeſts known to God with thankſgiving*; ſo let it be in this caſe; in which, if the grounds of thankſgiving be inquired for, I would condeſcend on theſe.

1. The mildneſs of our preſent government, and the liberty we have been, and ſtill are enjoying under it, to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs and honeſty. What ſort of Chriſtians in the nation is it, that can complain on this head, but they who would make it a point of conſcience and religion, to deprive others of their religious liberty? Yea, even the very manner of the preſent oppoſition and management of the plea of civil liberty, demonſtrates the mildneſs of the adminiſtration.

2. As the Lord, in his holy providence, has been giving occaſion to the nation to ſhew mercy to the poor and needy, the more than ordinary diſpoſition to almſgiving that has appeared in the nation, is matter of thankſgiving; and may it be a token for good! May the Lord diſpoſe all ranks of men to break off their ſins by righteouſneſs, and their iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of the nation's tranquillity! And let us not be unthankful for this, that the neceſſities of the poor are

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not so great with us as we hear they are in other kingdoms, and that the present season seems so promising.

3. The weakness and decay of the Antichristian power at this day in our nation, however much it be lamented by some, is ground of joyful thanksgiving to them who love the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world. May our king, and all the other kings, hate the whore, and make her more and more desolate and naked, and burn her flesh with fire! May the Lord more and more consume that man of sin, by the spirit of his mouth, till he destroy him with the brightness of his coming!

Let us be grieved for the prevalency of the Antichristian power in the nations of Europe, and cry to the head of the true church, that he may over-rule the present war, and rumours of wars, for the great purpose of breaking that power, that the gospel of the kingdom of heaven may have free course every where, and that all things may work together for saving his elect from among all ranks, by the knowledge of the truth, and so hasten the appearing of Jesus Christ our life, that we may appear with him in glory; to whom be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Note on the History of Mordecai and Haman, in the Book of Esther.

THE Old Testament foretells the things of the New, not only in express words, but also by facts recorded in its history. Thus the story of Joseph is not considered only as a narrative of facts, affording useful remarks upon the conduct of providence, but, at the same time, as a prophecy of the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ: and the apostle, speaking on that great subject, Philip. ii. 9. 10. gives some countenance to this, by pointing to a passage in the history of Joseph, Gen. xli. 4. 3. *They cried before him, Bow the knee.*

In like manner, his style, Col. ii. 14. 15. (which has occasioned several speculations among the learned), favours much of the story, of making the decree that was written to destroy the Jews, of none effect, and of Mordecai's triumphing over Haman, having spoiled him of his power, and making a shew of him and his sons upon that very tree

which had been prepared for himſelf: *Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs; and, having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

By this reference to the hiſtory of Eſther, we may ſee a beauty in the apoſtle's ſtyle, which cannot be ſo well perceived otherwiſe; and, at the ſame time, behold in that hiſtory, a very fit emblem of our deliverance from the condemning law, and from him that had the power of death, by the croſs of Chriſt, and of his ſpoiling Satan of his power, and triumphing over him and all the powers of darkneſs, in the tree where he who had the power of death, had ſet himſelf to deſtroy him.

The exaltation of Mordecai may, no leſs than that of Joſeph, be conſidered as a figure of Chriſt's exaltation. The words wherein it is expreſſed, are as applicable to Jeſus Chriſt as any thing that is ſaid of Joſeph. What ſhall we find in the ſtory of Joſeph's exaltation, that hits more exactly than theſe words, *For Mordecai the Jew* was *next unto king Ahaſuerus, and great to the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, ſeeking the good of his people, and ſpeaking peace to all his ſeed?*

And thus the book of Eſther, as well as the hiſtory of Joſeph, may be looked on as a prophecy; a prophecy of Jeſus Chriſt deſtroying him that had the power of death, by his croſs, and ſo delivering his people; a prophecy of his being given to be head over all things to the church of his brethren, his willing people, for whom he has obtained everlaſting peace, which he beſtows on them, by preaching peace to them which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

But if we ſhall conſider it merely as a hiſtory, giving us a notable inſtance of the wonderful providence of God about his church or peculiar people, which we may apply to any time or caſe wherein we ſhall find it uſeful; then it behoved Haman to ſtand for ſome great enemy of the church, high in power, and uſing all his intereſt to authoriſe and enable the enemies of the people of God to exterminate them. And Mordecai, again, muſt be one who never would have any connection with this Haman, nor go into any of his meaſures; a hearty ſtedfaſt friend, and loyal quiet ſubject to the king, even when unrewarded for his ſervices; but as ſteady and uniform in ſhewing diſ-

reſpect

reſpect to this prime miniſter; yea, our Mordecai muſt be ſuch a friend to the church, as to ſtand or fall with it, and its ruin muſt begin at his deſtruction.

If the application be not to ſome caſe of this nature, it cannot have much foundation in the text. And even in this caſe, it would be hard to reconcile the revenge on Haman, his family, and the many thouſands of the enemies of the Jews, to the ſpirit of the New Teſtament, as the Lord diſtinguiſhed it to his diſciples, when they ſought the deſtruction of a city that would not receive him. But if we ſhould take upon us to pray, that *they who tread in Haman's ſteps may ſhare in his fate*; how then could we anſwer to him who ſaid, *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you,* Matth. v. 43. 44. See ver. 19. and chap. vii. 26. 27.

And if we ſhould attempt to apply the ſtory of Haman to any prime miniſter in a government ſo tolerating, that all ſorts of pretenders to the title of the church, have liberty to ſerve God as they judge beſt, without fear, the application would be manifeſtly contrary to the text. The Jews were not the eſtabliſhed church in the kingdom of Ahaſuerus; nor do we hear of the independency of any eſtabliſhed religion, or of the Jews, upon the king, maintained by Mordecai.

The application would be yet more ridiculous, if either the caſe of Joſeph, or of Mordecai, prime miniſter to an abſolute prince, when he *laid a tribute upon the land, and the iſles of the ſea,* ſhould be ſet in oppoſition to any prime miniſter in a free nation, even ſuppoſing him to be raiſing himſelf and his maſter at the expenſe of the nation.

The ſtory of Mordecai, or of Joſeph, would be very ill choſen to humour the complaints of the people, and the fears ſuggeſted to them of the danger of their liberty in our time. If any of them ſhould be thus applied, it would either ſhew a defect of judgment in the applier, or manifeſt, what is very true, That little uſe can be made of the ſcripture, to encourage the common practice of *ſpeaking evil of dignities,* or to ſupport miniſters of the goſpel in *bringing railing accuſations againſt them before the Lord.*

A Letter on National Fasts appointed by the Clergy.

[Never before printed.]

SIR, *Aug.* 18. 1735.

THE clergy are not inſenſible of ſeveral things at this day, that have a manifeſt tendency to weaken their authority; nor can they bear them with that patience wherewith they endure the contempt of the authority of Jeſus Chriſt, in his law, that appears daily among their moſt truſty friends and followers. The lives of theſe can eaſily ſhew you, they are not ſpending their zeal for more honour to Chriſt, in a ſtrict obedience to his laws in the New Teſtament, or in our conformity to him in humility, truth, and love, and in that which he calls pure and undefiled religion. Nor are they indeed contending, that we ſhould give him more honour, in a firm belief of his teſtimony in the ſcriptures, and in a ſelf-denied dependence on his merit. But the thing for which they ſo earneſtly contend, is, that we ſhould give him more honour in their leaders, the clergy, his repreſentatives and ambaſſadors, as they call themſelves; though they can neither ſhew their commiſſion, as did the apoſtles, nor prove themſelves to the conviction of mens conſciences, to be his miniſters in any ſhape, by the characters he has expreſsly given of ſuch in his law.

The kingdom of the clergy is a little darkened in this age of polite Chriſtianity, and they are in no ſmall pain about it. But it would be a far greater diſtreſs on them, if none ſhould profeſs the goſpel, but they who ſee the evidence of it with their own eyes, and are willing to ſhew ſubjection to the authority of Jeſus in it, as the only Lord of their conſciences: for this would deſtroy their kingdom altogether. It is not the decay of the worſhip of Jeſus Chriſt that gives pain to the clergy, for that has appeared but very little in the world theſe many ages; but it is the viſible decay of the worſhip that has been of a long time paid to themſelves in the Chriſtian world, that gives them the greateſt diſquiet.

This

This is the true cause of our national fasts, that come now to be kept yearly. The government has no reason to be fond of them, and the polite clergy are too complaisant to give the court any uneasiness on this head. But the managers of the two last assemblies are true clergymen, to whom nothing can be more delightful, than the homage paid to them by a whole nation, in keeping a holiday of their making. In the midst of the contempt they groan under, they have a sweet refreshment in this display of their authority and power.

There have been, long before now, complaints among them of the want of national fasts; and they earnestly desired that the general assembly would manifest their prerogative in the appointing of such a fast, that the nation might have a sense of the intrinsic power of the church. But it was matter of lamentation, and a very great grievance, that the leading men in the assemblies were like betraying the power of the church, in that matter to the court. The late assemblies have come under another management, by ways and means of which you cannot be utterly ignorant, considering the noise that has been in the nation about them; and those who have got to the helm, have revived national fasting; yet they had not courage enough to appoint it in the face of the King's Commissioner; they left it to their commission. Though this be a sort of condescension, in the manner of the appointment, that they could wish they were not obliged to, they have, notwithstanding, the satisfaction to see the whole nation, one way or other, bowing the knee to them on their appointed day; yea, and to behold their brethren, out of whose hands they have wrested the power, and who do not love their fast, nor the grounds of it, yet obliged by their own interest to pay them homage, in observing it religiously; while they, on the other hand, have an excellent opportunity of rendering them odious to the people.

Do you think, Sir, it is an afflicting sense of the dishonours done to God, and of the universal disobedience to the laws of the gospel in this Christian nation, that is the great moving cause of the appointing or keeping of these fasts? If this were the case, would we not see, that, after the zeal shewed in the fast of the last year, the most zealous, at least, would have altered the course of their lives to the better, in bringing forth more of the fruits meet for repentance required in the gospel, than we could see before?

Or

Or would not the clergy, their leaders, have been perceived, by this time, going before them as examples of more self-denial, and mortification, to the honour and power, the wealth, the ease, and pleasure of this world; more charity; more forgiveness to enemies, and patient bearing of wrongs, and more mercy to the poor, than could be observed in them before? Yet I scarce suppose their practice has shewed you that any thing of this ever came into their minds.

When men were roused by any thing extraordinary in the Heathen world, and their fear awakened by threatening providences, they were stirred up to greater fervour and diligence in the worship of their idols; but never thought of reforming their lives. As we Christians interpret their conduct, they offended the true God the more by the sacrifices to their idols, the more he afflicted them with his judgments; and for his goodness bestowed on them they multiplied sacrifices to his rivals.

But our national fasts are not stirred up by any thing extraordinary befalling our part of the Christian world, to awaken religious fear in the multitude. Yet a nation of this world can never miss to afford sins and causes of God's wrath in abundance. While this cannot be denied, the clergy can never be at a loss for causes of a fast. There are indeed a great many of the people, that are not to be wrought up to any kind of religion, but by what concerns the crop of the year, and the weather, on which it depends; and therefore, to make them easy under the command of abstinence from their labour, whereof they find more sensible benefit than of the keeping of the holy day, you will seldom miss something of the crop, and the weather, in the appointment of a fast; and then the poor people think they cannot seek a good harvest, and neglect the fast.

Barrenness and unfruitfulness under clear gospel, and excellent means of grace, is another thing that goes of course in the appointments of fasts; but it is not very clear what they mean by it. When you read the gospel, you will be ready to imagine, they are complaining of the want of that fruit required, Luke iii. 9. 10. 11.; and if this were the case, you would see the poor and needy, the widows and fatherless clothed, and filled by means of their fasts; at least the hungry would get the bread they abstained from on their fast-day; but the poor are not made very sensible of this, and you cannot give me many instances of

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a diligent obſervation of Iſ. lviii. on theſe days. I would rather take the true barrenneſs and unfruitfulneſs that is chiefly intended, to be the little revenue of honour that riſes to the clergy from the fine ſermons they preach; which I take to be the great mean of grace among them; becauſe they make more of it than of any other mean. They have trained the people to expect more good of hearing one of their ſermons, than of hearing the very words of God, and the preachings of the prophets and apoſtles in the holy ſcriptures read to them, or in reading them themſelves. They will not read the Bible to the people without gloſſing it by a ſermon as far as it is read; and yet I dare ſay the diſcourſes of our Lord and his apoſtles are clearer than many of their ſermons, and would make a man ſooner bring forth the fruits of the goſpel, if he had but liberty to hearken to them. Yea, they will not adminiſter the ſupper, without the mighty noiſe of a ſermon, filling the ear and exciting the paſſions, perhaps engaging them in party-quarrels, in the very time of partaking. Thus I think we need have no doubt of the mean of grace they chiefly intend, nor of what they mean by the goſpel, when they lament unfruitfulneſs under it; and in this caſe, the want of fruit muſt be a notable deficiency in the reward the clergy expect from the people, for their labour in their ſermons.

Some fooliſh people about Glaſgow happened to ſay they were more edified by the hiſtory of the paſſion repreſented in a picture, than by many ſermons; but what a work has been made about this! Here was unfruitfulneſs with a witneſs, when a fine picture was laid in the balance with fine ſermons, of which there have been ſo many made at Glaſgow by the worthieſt of men, who had been highly honoured there. What a terrible off-falling muſt have been in that place, when the very profeſſors of the worſhip of the clergy had come the length to prefer a picture, an idolatrous picture, to the ſermons! The clergy, in other parts of the Chriſtian world, managed their buſineſs by pictures or images, more than by ſermons; but here it is otherwiſe. In the true extenſive ſenſe of idolatry, there may be idolaters by ſermons as well as by pictures. The clergy have no heart-hatred at idolatry in the general; but they contend here, that men ſhould adore Chriſt in their ſermons, which they muſt believe to be the very true goſpel; and elſewhere, they demand worſhip to Chriſt in their pictures. And how would a man be looked on, think you, that ſhould

ſtoutly refuſe to worſhip him in either of them, but at the ſame time adore and worſhip him as exhibited in the New Teſtament? I fear the clergy of all ſorts would reckon him a fruitleſs branch in their vineyard, and caſt him over their hedge.

But what need I explain to you the phraſe "unfruitfulneſs under the goſpel and means of grace?" You can eaſily perceive they mean themſelves and their ſermons, when they make the contempt of the goſpel and goſpel-miniſters a cauſe of faſting. And you will not doubt, that it requires ſomething elſe on their part, to cure us of this evil than the exertion of their power to make us faſt on this account.

They remember the time of the ſolemn league and covenant, when they ſat in full power, and ruled the nation in all reſpects; and they moſt earneſtly wiſh it again, pretending that religion was then in a flouriſhing condition. If they mean the true Chriſtian religion, I cannot believe it, for this reaſon, becauſe their kingdom was then in its full ſtrength; and this is the reaſon for which, I am convinced, they ſo earneſtly wiſh it again, and ſo much lament the nation's backſliding from that covenant, which was then forced upon it: for the clergy can never be mighty in this world, merely by their own power. However, you ſee the breach of that covenant is one never failing cauſe of their faſts. But they muſt not, for this, break with the preſent government, eſtabliſhed on the ruins of that league; ſo they will not ſo much as name the word *covenants*, but engagements; *ſolemn engagements* is the word, at which, it ſeems, the ſtate cannot take ſuch umbrage. You will be ready to reckon this a ſolemn juggle, like that in the ſolemn league, *according to the example of the beſt reformed churches*. They lament the breach of their covenants, and they oblige the nation, which is not yet fully ſenſible of their weakneſs, to lament it with them; but they dare not give their covenants their proper name. Their zeal gives them courage, where there is no fear. The word *engagements* puts them in mind, that there is an engagement, whereby they ſtand bound, in the firſt place, againſt the Independents, the old enemies of their power. And they have got a new kind of them, not capable, yea, nor inclinable, to do them ſuch miſchief, as did the old warlike Independents; but they love them the worſe, that they are not like thoſe bold ones: and their zeal for the broken

engagements

engagements can vent itself with abundance of freedom against them, when they refuse to join them in any shape in their fasts for broken engagements: for they have nothing to fear from them. It is true, they cannot hurt them, for as weak as they are, without the help of the inferior magistrates; nor can they touch them without going beyond the law, and acting contrary to the very nature of the government we live under. But if these magistrates shall yet give the clergy their power to knock down these Independents, their principles lead them to outbrave the clergy's rage and violence, with the Christian meekness and patience; and when they resist them in this manner, with the true courage of the Christian hero, the clergy may come in the issue to be more distressed, than they could be by the warlike courage of the old Independents. When we resist the devil himself, we see his weakness; he is no better than a noisy bully before the spirit and courage of a true Christian. When force and violence is the clergyman's argument, the Christian's answer is patience; and the sufferer gets the victory, and gains his prize.

The famous four brethren ought to be very much considered, in the late turn of the affairs of the national church. The neglect shewed them, especially by the last assembly, was intolerable; and some of them have resented it in such a high degree, that you may wonder how they condescended to keep their fast. But you must think they are not quite desperate and without hope, that the time may fall, when they may be at the helm in the church; and as the authority and power of the clergy over the nation is not capable of appearing more evidently in any thing, than in this affair of the fasts, they cannot yet think of letting it down.

Now, Sir, you see a set of men calling themselves Christ's ministers and ambassadors, sitting as lords over a nation of this world, and the whole nation subject to their authority, one way or other, bowing before them on their appointed day. This is a post that, you know, Jesus Christ refused when it was in his offer; but how these his ministers came by it, and upon what condition they hold it, will appear fully at the end of their kingdom, and it draws to an end. In the mean time, if you would sleep in a whole skin, hold your peace, and eat your loaf. But if you will at any rate be free, then you must endure hardness.—*I am, &c.*

The END *of the* SECOND VOLUME.

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